

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS  
ON THE  
EARTHQUAKES

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That have happened in  
EUROPE and AMERICA,

But chiefly in the Islands of  
JAMAICA, ENGLAND, SICILY, MALTA, &c.

WITH A  
Particular and historical ACCOUNT of them, and  
divers other EARTHQUAKES.

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By JOHN SHOWER, D. D.

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L O N D O N :

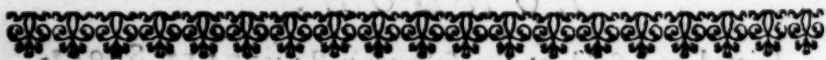
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**A**N APPENDIX to this  
PAMPHLET will speedily be  
published, being a Continuation of  
the Account of the EARTH-  
QUAKES that have happened  
from the foregoing Account to this  
Time.







T H E  
P R E F A C E  
T O T H E  
R E A D E R.

**T**HE late Earthquakes abroad in America, and Sicily, with that we had here last September, made so much discourse amongst all sorts of people, that I endeavoured the serious improvement of 'em, in a sermon on that occasion; which at the desire of many, is now enlarged, with many historical passages of other Earthquakes, and moral reflections, relating to our own country.

As to the authors I have cited, I have consulted the originals as to the most of 'em; and am well satisfied of the truth of those few others, which I had not the leisure, or opportunity to look into. In some chronological differences between historians, I have mentioned that year, which I thought the most probable: but if the matter of fact be truly related, though I should

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mistake



mistake the year, the reader is not much concerned. Philosophically to discuss the nature of Earthquakes, many others (whom I need not name, have attempted: such a narration concerning the late extraordinary one in Sicily, I am informed we may expect shortly from the learned Malpighius.

We cannot wonder if the concernedness of the Hea-then world, upon any such violent motions of the earth did degenerate into superstition. Owing a multiplicity of Gods, they knew not to which of 'em to ascribe such events; and therefore we read of the ancient Romans, that upon those occasions, they never addressed their prayers and vows to any one particular deity, as in other cases they were wont to do, lest (saith <sup>1</sup> Varro) they should mistake; because they knew not by whose influence the earth was shaken. To that modesty or ignorance of the Romans, we may oppose the vanity of the Greeks, who boasted they could foretel Earthquakes, as is pretended to have been done by <sup>2</sup> Pythagoras. But when Earthquakes happened, they were all wont to quit their <sup>3</sup> civil and common affairs, and betake themselves to their devotions, and by prayers, and sacrifices, endeavour to appease the anger of the Gods.

Concerning the late Earthquakes in Sicily, it hath been observed, that <sup>4</sup> Messina received less damage than some other cities. The people in that country be-

<sup>1</sup> Quoniam & quâ vi, & per quam Deorum, Dearumve Terra tremuit, incertum esset. Aul. Gell. Noct. Att. l. 2. c. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. Laert. in Vit. Pherec. See more instances: La Mothe le Vayer, Lett. LXXV. des Tremb. de Terra.

<sup>3</sup> Anno 386; Crebris Terræ motibus undique nunciatis, tam multæ sunt indictæ feriæ Romæ, ad placandos Cœlestes, ut nec senatus haberi, nec administrari Respublica posset, Consulibus Sacrificando, Expiandoq; occupatis. Lescloper in Ciceron. p. 229. Imperante gordiano tertio, fuit terræ motus eousque gravis, ut civitates etiam terræ hiatu cum populis deperirent: ob quæ sacrificia per totam urbem totumq; orbem terrarum ingentia celebrata sunt, Hist. August. Scriptores. Jul. Capitol. Gordianus tertius, Tom. 2. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Present State of Europe, March 1693. p. 86.



ing very superstitious, the monks made advantage of their simplicity, and spread abroad a report at the time of the Earthquake, that the B. Virgin had revealed to a young girl of nine years old, (her particular favourite) that by means of her intercession, she had obtained, that the city of Messina, which is under her protection, should not be swallowed up : This for a little while somewhat revived their spirits. But the intercession of S. Agatha could not procure the same favour for the city of Catanea, whereof she is patroness. For when the Earthquake began, the people flew to the cathedral, where one of the canons carried about the relicks of the saint : But neither the relicks, nor the prayers of the saint, could stop the thunderbolt which fell upon that city ; but it was overturned as in a moment, and not one house left standing. And besides wounded and maimed that were digged out of the ruins, eighteen thousand are supposed to have perished there. The kingdom of Naples hath had a share in that Earthquake, as well as the island of Malta.

Our great difficulty in reflecting on such providences, will be to avoid the two extreams, of atheism on the one hand, and superstition on the other ; not to make too little, or too much of such events ; not to overlook the divine agency, and warning thereby, as if they had no meaning ; nor on the other hand, to be bold and positive, and particular in determining what they signify, and what we may expect to follow. I have given divers instances of other publick calamities which have been preceded by Earthquakes. If national repentance, and reformation do not prevent it, we have reason to expect such, from moral Prognostications, had we no such call, as by the late Earthquakes, to consider our ways.

Few, we may fear, do practically acknowledge God's government, and own his agency in these things.  
The



The most are confident, and careless, as if they carried nothing in them either of presage, or admonition; or at least nothing but good news. We have been told in <sup>5</sup> print, that if any thing can be collected from the late Earthquake here, September the 8th, it is this, that as we had a long and calm serenity of weather after it, so a lasting peace and tranquillity was settled in the world by the conduct and victorious arms of King William. How little ground we have to expect this without reformation, I leave to the consideration of all who seriously believe God's government of the world, and know what he hath done to other nations, and people.

I may promise myself the concurrence of all good men in our improvement of the late Earthquakes, which I endeavour to persuade to, *viz.* thankfully to own our publick national mercies, while other countries are made desolate. That trembling of the earth in England, 'tis true, was not a prodigy in one sense, because we were not destroyed by it: but then it had not been a warning, but an execution, as to us, not the signal, but the judgment. Upon the account of a deliverance from a threatening Earthquake, *An. Christ.* 365, we find the city of <sup>6</sup> Alexandria observed an annual feast, in commemoration of it.

When some are made examples, and signs to us, God expects we should own his goodness that we are spared, and take heed that we provoke not his anger, by the like and future transgressions. When our Saviour exhorts us to remember Lot's wife, we may suppose it was not the miracle, so much as the moral he intended. *God's judgment on Jerusalem, he said, shall be <sup>7</sup> an instruction and an astonishment unto the nations round a-*

<sup>5</sup> Philosophical Discourse of Earthquakes. by C. H. 4to,

<sup>6</sup> Sozomen, l. 6. c. 2. Amm. Marcell. Le Sieur.

<sup>7</sup> Ezek. v. 15.



out. So was Pharaoh warned by what had been done to the proud Assyrian; <sup>8</sup> *Speak unto Pharaoh, and to his multitude, Who art thou like in thy greatness? Behold the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches, &c.* In like manner he argues with Nineveh, from his severity on No, or Alexandria; <sup>9</sup> *Behold I am against thee; art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers? The punishment of one people, or person, should be a warning unto all. The Greek word for punishment, doth signify example. With what terror doth God threaten not to spare Israel, because they continued in their security and rebellion, <sup>2</sup> though he had destroyed the Amorite before them? May we not fear, lest he say of us, as Jer. xlix. 12, 13. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup, have assuredly drunken, and art thou he that shalt altogether go unpunished? Thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse, and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. God hath favoured us hitherto, and we consider it not; he hath loved us, and hated others, as he loved Jacob, and hated Esau; and yet we are ready to say, Wherein hath he loved us? Behold, saith the Lord, was not Esau Jacob's brother? yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau; I laid his mountains, and his heritage waste, &c.*

But however God may in sovereignty deal with us, as to publick deliverance and preservation, and a good and speedy issue of the present war (whereas we hear of another Earthquake in Sicily, the last month)

<sup>8</sup> Ezek. xxxi 3.

<sup>9</sup> Nahum. iii. 5, 8.

<sup>1</sup> Παράδειγμα, Matth. i. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Amos ii. 6, 9. See Jerom. xlv. 2, 7, 9. Ezek. xxiii. 5, — 31.

<sup>3</sup> Malachi i. 2, 3.



yet I have shewn, in the last chapter, that no particular person, without repentance, shall long escape his justice, 1 Kings xix. 17. *They that escape the sword of Hazael, shall Jehu slay; and they that escape the sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay*; that is, they shall perish in another world; for the prophet Elisha denounced eternal judgment on those who escaped a temporal ruin if they continued in their sins.

London, May 26,  
1693.





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PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS  
O N  
EARTHQUAKES.

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INTRODUCTION.

J. S.

*An historical, particular account of the late Earthquakes, which gave occasion to this discourse. The design thereof proposed from that passage of the Psalmist, My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

R.

**T**HAT the late Earthquakes may be considered, and improved to the best purposes, it will be proper to premise a short narrative, or historical account of them, according to the order of time wherein they happened. And therefore I begin with that of Jamaica.

P. A.

In the year 1692. on the 7th of June, there happened a dreadful Earthquake in the island of Jamaica, which made great Ruins and devastations throughout the whole country; but especially in the capital town of Port-Royal, which was almost swallowed up and overflowed by the sinking of the earth, and irruption of the sea. Two letters from the minister of the place (published by authority) give a particular account of it; that it threw down most of the houses, churches, sugar and indigo-works, mills and bridges, throughout the whole island, that it tore the rocks and mountains, (others tell us that it levelled some mountains, and reduced them to plains)

B

that



that it destroyed some whole plantations, and threw them into the sea ; but Port-Royal had much the greatest share in this terrible judgment.

It is added, by a farther account in the Gazette of Thursday, August 18. that on the harbour-side the houses all sunk down in a minute's time, from the depth of three to five fathom water : in the streets next the wharf, the earth opened itself wide and deep, and instantly gushed out an inundation of water, so that multitudes were drowned. Among other accidents of the Earthquake, the Swan-Frigate lying at the wharf for careening, was driven in among the houses, and there lost.

—The minister in his letter saith farther, that such was the desperate wickedness of the people there, that he was afraid to continue among them. That on the same day of the Earthquake, as soon as night came on, some lewd rogues, whom they call privateers, fell to breaking open ware-houses, and houses deserted, to rob and rifle their neighbours, whilst the earth trembled under them, and some of the houses fell upon them in the act. And those audacious whores who remained still upon the place, were as impudent and drunken as ever. And that since the Earthquake, when he was on shore to pray with the bruised and dying people, and to christen children, he met with too many drunk and swearing.

The day when this calamity befel the town and island, was very clear, affording not any suspicion of the least evil ; but in the space of three minutes, about half an hour after eleven in the morning, Port-Royal, the fairest town of all the English plantations, the best emporium and mart of this part of the world, exceeding in riches, and abounding in all good things, was shaken and shattered to pieces, and covered, for the greatest part, by the sea ; the wharf, and two whole streets beyond it, intirely swallowed by the sea.

He, with the president of the council, running to save themselves, made towards Morgan's fort, because a wide open place ; he thought to be there securest from the falling houses : but as he was going, he saw the earth  
open,



open, and swallow up a multitude of people, and the sea mounting in upon them over the fortifications. He tells us farther, that their large and famous burying-place, called the pallisados, was destroyed by the Earthquake; and that the sea washed away the carcases of those that were buried out of their graves; their tombs being dashed to pieces by the motion and concussion: that the whole harbour, one of the fairest he ever saw, was covered with the dead bodies of people of all conditions, floating up and down without burial. That in the opening of the earth, the houses and inhabitants sinking down together, some of these were driven up again by the sea, which arose in those breaches, and so did wonderfully escape. Some were swallowed up to the neck, and then the earth shut upon them, and squeezed them to death: and in that manner several were left buried with their heads above ground, only some heads the dogs have eaten; others are covered with dust and earth by the people, which yet remain in the place, to avoid the stench. So that by the opening of the earth, and the fall of the houses, and the inundation of the waters, it is thought 1500 persons are lost, and many of good note.

After he was escaped in a ship, he saith, he could not sleep all night for the returns of the Earthquake almost every hour, which made all the guns in the ship to jar and rattle; and he supposeth the whole town of Port-Royal will shortly be swallowed up of the sea, the houses falling, and the sea encroaching daily. That there were sad accounts of mischiefs done by the Earthquake in other parts of the island: as from St. Anne's, they heard of above 1000 acres of woodland changed into sea, carrying with it whole plantations.

His own preservation was very remarkable and unexpected: after he had prayed with the people, and given them serious exhortations to repentance, (in which exercises he spent near an hour and half) he was desired by some merchants to retire to some ship in the harbour, whom he accompanied, passing over the tops of some



houses, which lay levelled with the surface of the water, got first into a canoe, and then into a long-boat, which put him on board a ship.

*Of the Earthquake in England.*

**O**N the 8th of September following, 1692. an Earthquake was felt at London, and in several parts of Essex, Kent, Suffex, Hampshire, &c. as Sheerness, Sandwich, Deal, Maidstone, Portsmouth, &c. the people leaving their houses in many places, lest they should fall on their heads; but it lasted not above two minutes: it was about two a-clock; some reckoned at London it was about four minutes past two. It was felt in most parts of the Dutch and Spanish Netherlands, as also in Germany and France. It affected places most on the sea-coasts, and near great rivers. It went not beyond 52 degrees and 40 minutes of northern latitude: how far it reached to the south and east is not yet certainly known for want of good intelligence: we have already traced it beyond Paris, to the 48th degree of north latitude; and beyond the Rhine, on the east, to Francfort: so that we know at present of 260 miles square shaken by it. The time of its happening here in England, and beyond the seas, seems to vary some minutes; but that may easily be accounted for by the difference of <sup>2</sup> meridians. So that the inflamed damp, saith Mr. Ray, which caused this Earthquake, was lodged deep in the earth, the caverns that contained it, passing under the bottom of the sea.

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Ray's Physico-Theol. discourse of the deluge. Disc. 2. p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Dr. T. Robinson in a letter to Mr. Ray, dated September 22. 1692.



*Of the Earthquakes in Sicily and Malta.*

THE following account of the earthquakes in Sicily, was published by authority here, *viz.* from Messina, January 20, 1692-3, they write, that several Earthquakes had happened in that island, which were most violent in the southern parts of it, and have laid in heaps many cities and villages. Catanea was shaken on the 9th instant, and on the 11th quite destroyed, not one house left standing; and near 20,000 persons perished in that city alone.

Augusta was almost destroyed at the same time, and 400 barrels of powder that were in the castle, took fire at the same time, by lightening, or some other accident, and blew up about 1000 people, who were got in there for their security.

The ancient Saragossa hath fared no better; and the cities of Modica, Jaci and Noto, and all the villages from mount *Ætna* to cape Passaro have suffered extremely. 'Tis computed that above 100,000 persons have been destroyed by these Earthquakes. Palermo felt the shock on the 11th, and the vice-king retired, with all his family, on board the galleys in that port. Most of the inhabitants of this city lay in the fields without the gates, &c.

A letter from Naples, Feb. 3. mentions, that by the shock on the 11th of the last month, 37 cities and towns and large villages were quite destroyed, and 130,000 persons.

By other letters (in the Gazette of Thursday March 16.) we have this account from Messina, Feb. 3. That they hear every day of the lamentable effects of the late Earthquakes, and give the following list of places, and persons destroyed, *viz.*

Calatagirone, about a fourth part of the city ruined, and 1500 persons killed.



Luochuela, quite destroyed, with most of the inhabitants, the number not known.

Mineo, a royal city, most of it fallen, and 3000 killed.

Militello, quite destroyed, with many of the inhabitants, the number not known.

Palaonia, very much shattered, but few persons killed.

Scordia, the palace fallen down, and 20 killed.

Francofome, much shattered.

Sentini, quite ruined, and 3000 killed.

Carlontini, quite destroyed, with many of the inhabitants, the number not known.

Augusta, quite destroyed, and 5000 killed.

Siragosa, above half ruined, and 6000 killed.

Noto, quite ruined, and 7000 killed.

Specafurno, quite ruined, and 3000 killed.

Scichilo, quite ruined, and 8000 killed.

Santa Croce, 100 killed.

Modica, quite destroyed, and 1000 killed.

Ragusa, greatest part of it ruined, and 7000 killed.

Cefomaro, 200 killed.

Biscuti, 100 killed.

Chiuramonte, wholly destroyed, and 300 killed.

Monteruffo, 200 killed.

Giamantano, 300 killed.

Bucchin, 160 killed.

Patuzzolo, quite ruined, and 1000 killed.

Scodia, 100 killed.

Pasceni, quite ruined, and 600 killed.

Furla, quite ruined, and 800 killed.

Sciorti, quite ruined, and 2000 killed.

Vizzini, quite ruined, and 3000 killed.

Licodia, 400 killed.

Catanea, wholly destroyed, and 18,000 killed.

Jaci, much ruined, and 1800 killed.

In all 73,680 persons killed,



In another letter from Naples, dated March 3. published in the Gazette of the 3d of April, there is an account from Palermo, that the vice-roy of Sicily had sent commissioners to take an exact account of the damage occasioned by the late Earthquakes in that island; and they had found that the ruins of the towns and villages, as well as loss of people, was greater and more deplorable, than was at first reported; and that there had perished 100,000 persons.

A more particular account of this terrible Earthquake in Sicily, was printed at Rome, and since printed here from the Italian copy; part whereof I shall insert. The author professeth he cannot give himself, nor others, all the satisfaction he could wish, there being so many little places, and even some considerable towns, so utterly destroyed, that there are no inhabitants left, to give us an account of the manner how these places were swallowed up. So that of these we can have no other narrative, but what people at a distance, and in a hurry themselves, for fear of sinking into the same ruin, have been able to give us.

The Earthquake diffused itself into all the three districts, or divisions, into which the island of Sicily is usually divided; Valli di Noto, Mazaro, and Mono. The greatest shock of all was from mount *Ætna* to cape Passaro, the Pachmus of the ancients. In all this vast tract of land, nothing stood the shock, but all fell under the weight of a general ruin.

It was on the 7th of January, 1692-3, about 10 at night, that mount *Ætna* began to utter those hideous roarings, which seldom but usher in some tragedy of the nature of what followed. Those loud bellowings continued till the 9th, and about 12 o' clock began to cease. Within an hour after, the inhabitants of Catanea, which is the next town to the mountain, began to perceive a shaking under them, about three minutes together. This did little hurt, other than to fright the people, and give them fears of some further



ther hurt. During this shake, and for an hour before, there was not the least noise heard from mount *Ætna*, but within less than a minute after the shake was over, not only did the noise redouble, infinitely more terrible than before, but the whole top of the mountain appeared all in flames.

All this was but the fore-runner of the horriddest shake of all, which fell out on the 11th, which affected the whole island, though not equally. And by the exactest computation can be made, the whole period of it lasted not above six minutes, from Messina northwards, to Cape Coio, the farthest point of Sicily to the south.

Catanea is thought to be the first that fell under the weight of this heavy calamity. This city is as ancient as most in Sicily, seated in a pleasant and rich soil, inhabited by several of the gentry thereabouts, endow'd with an university, and containing about 24,000 souls, was sunk out of sight in a moment. There happened to be some fisher-boats at that time in the bay that lies south of the town, and within a league's distance, who give an account, that they saw the city sink down, with the noise, as it were of some thousand pieces of great ordnance discharged all at once. After it was thus vanished out of their sight, the fishermen say, that, some minutes after, to the eastward, near where the city stood, there rose up a little mountain, which lifting itself several times a considerable height, above the ordinary level of the ground thereabouts, sunk at last likewise out of their sight. They declare also, that during all this horrid tragedy, they expected every moment to be swallowed up in the bay, by reason of the strange violent agitations of the sea. And scarce was this heaving up of the imaginary mountain on the south-side of Catanea over, but they felt the sea calm.

It is thought there hath not escaped of the inhabitants of Catanea above 2000 in all, some of those escaping after the first shake, on the 9th, others on the  
morn-



morning of the 11th, who took the warning. But they were the better sort of people only, who had the opportunity to make so happy an escape, the rest falling under the universal ruin. In the place where Catanea stood, appears now, at a distance, a great lake, with some great heaps of rubbish, appearing here and there above water.

The same shake that utterly destroyed Catanea, did lay in heaps more than half of Saragossa, the ancient Syracuse, once the greatest city of Sicily; and, if we will believe Strabo and others, the largest, once, in the world, and may contend with any in Europe for antiquity. The least computation that can be made of the loss of the inhabitants of it, is above 7000: And some hundreds were digged out of the ruins alive, but lame and bruised; so that few of them, it is thought, will recover. Most of the magistrates and people of best fashion, ran into the great church for shelter, where they met with death, by the fall of the stone roof, and the steeple both together.

The city of Noto (which once contended for the pre-eminence with Syracuse itself) had yet a worse fate: scarce any part of it is now standing, though situated on an high rock, almost inaccessible on all sides, but by one narrow passage. The mighty hardness of the rock seemed to have secured it from the hazard of Earthquakes; but it felt the shake of the 9th; and, on the 11th of January, it was, in a moment, laid in heaps: the number of the inhabitants is computed about 7000, and very few are escaped.

Augusta, a city well situated, and adorned with large and safe harbours; a place of good trade for corn. The inhabitants reckoned near 6000, of whom we have account of none left; many killed on the 9th, more on the 10th, and the rest buried by the over-turning of the town on the 11th.

Lentini, the ancient Leontium, famous for a beautiful lake on which it stood; a place of about 3000 families, and a place of a tolerable trade by fishing, and



and salt mines, was reduced to ashes on the 11th; and it is not known if any of the inhabitants be saved. The water of the lake is now become brackish, and of a salt and bituminous taste; and vast numbers of fish are every day found dead on the shore.

Calatgironè, a pretty town, containing about 7000 people, and well built, most of hewn stone; on the 11th a fifth part of the town was over-turned, and two monasteries; and, it is thought, no fewer than 2000 souls were destroyed.

Mineo felt both the shake of the 9th and 11th; on the former, the heavens were serene, scarce a cloud appearing above the horizon; but on the 11th, there was a storm of thunder and lightning for six hours. At both times several houses, and a large church were over-turned, and it is thought near 4000 of the inhabitants perished.

Monreal, or Morreal, was shaken and shattered; and Palermo, the seat of the vice-roy, but not above 100 people killed. Pasceni, consisting of about 200 families, the richest of any little town in Sicily, hath not one single house left standing, nor one single person saved. Patuzolo, a bigger town, underwent the same fate; the number of inhabitants about 1000 at least: It is not known that any are saved.

So for Furla, whose inhabitants we reckoned to be near 1000 souls. The like for Sciorti, which, by the shake of the 11th, is a vast heap of ruins, only a church, belonging to a Benedictine nunnery, is entire: we know of none of the inhabitants saved, and they are reckoned to amount to 2000 souls.

The same fate befel Militello, no inconsiderable town, probably containing about 6000 people, whereof no one is left to give tidings how its calamity came about.

Luochela fared somewhat better: many, about half of the people, left the town on the shake of the 9th of January, when a great part of the houses fell. The castle was swallowed up in a moment, in sight



of the people; and a considerable lake is in the place where the castle stood. The rest of the town and inhabitants were utterly destroyed on the 11th. Of 2000 people, one half perished.

There was little damage done in Palonia, another well-built town, but that, besides feeling the shock of the 9th, and the church shattered, the dome was thrown down on the 11th, which broke the high altar to pieces, and crushed to death some 300 people, with the priest that was saying mass. The like almost for Buchino, a considerable village.

Scodia, a burgh, about the bigness of the other, was greatly shaken on the 11th, and about 150 people killed by the fall of the church, in the time of mass. In a deep lake, within two miles of it (two miles about) by the shake of the 11th, there opened a large Casma near the midst of the lake, which swallowed up the water (which by that of the 9th was lessened) and left the whole channel dry land, which continues so.

Another village, called Chivramonte, had its houses shattered by the shake of the 9th, but overturned altogether on the 11th, and the inhabitants buried in the ruins, computed between 3 and 400.

Monteruffo was considerably shaken on the 9th; and, on the 11th, 200 people, who fled into the castle, were, with it, buried in the ground; and the place where it stood is now a pool of water, of a brinish taste.

The beautiful town of Vizzini, containing about 3500 souls, though it lay on a rising hill, made up of nothing but hardest stones, of the nature of marble was yet shaken on the 9th, and swallowed, with the inhabitants, on the 11th, who thought the danger had then been over.

The large village of Modica, containing about 4000 people, was so suddenly swallowed up on the 9th, that no one person escaped. Since this hundred Years, this village hath twice changed its seat by Earth-quakes,



quakes, the people till now saving themselves. Several rivers and rivulets near this and other places in Sicily, are covered by hills, in the form of a vault, or natural bridge, thrown over them by the Earthquake.

This Earthquake caused the fall of some houses at Bisenti, and the bruising to death of about 100 persons. Francosante suffered more by lightning and thunder for three days, than by the shake of the Earthquake.

Carlontini, a town of good trade, and well inhabited, containing about 4000 people; a sixth part of them perished in the Earthquake on the 11th; the rest escaped by the warning on the 9th.

Ragusa, a beautiful town; its situation, buildings, churches, monasteries, and territories about it, combine to make it a sort of terrestrial paradise; felt many shakings on the 8th, with lightning and thunder: but on the 11th, the biggest street in the town, the town-house, two churches, and many houses were overturned, or swallowed up. The least calculation of people that perished is 8000, of whom the citizens of the best quality make up a great part of that number.

Specafurno, a town of considerable bigness, on the side of a hill, all planted with vineyards, and well inhabited, fell under the same calamity; partly by lightning and thunder on the 10th; and the whole town in a moment's time on the 11th. About a mile from the town was a pleasant fresh water lake on the South side which is now almost all dry land; the fish dead on the shore, and the water of a brinish taste, and now of a black colour. The people that perished there are computed to be at least 3500, about 300 only saved themselves the day before.

The town Scichilo, that hath within 50 years been eight times in hazard of an Earthquake, felt this on the 8th of January, and within 24 hours there succeeded above 20 shakes, the last still exceeding the first in violence; but on the 11th the whole town, in less than two moments vanished out of sight: in the room of it is now a stinking pool of water: and of 6000



7000 thousand inhabitants of this pleasant town, it is thought there is no one saved. Besides a strong castle on the east side of the town, which is now all in heaps, and above 30 people buried alive in them.

In Cefamerò, a village of above 200 houses, near 200 people perished in the church, whither they fled for shelter, to implore the aid of St. Katherine of Sienna; and some 20 in the village. In Santa Croce, another village, about 100 of the inhabitants perished, the rest having fled to the fields without the town. In the little town of Giamontano, in the quarter nearest the river, about 350 persons perished, and about 40 more. The tower of Lacodia underwent near the same fate; all the houses of timber were overwhelmed by the shake of the 11th, and in them about 300 of the inhabitants.

Jaci, a very big town, was greatly shattered, especially in the fall of two churches on the 9th, in the time of divine service. Many of the houses of the town were overturned on the 11th, together with two convents, particularly that of the Minimes, where was kept St. Peter's net, in which he took that vast quantity of fish mentioned in the gospel. By the fall of the houses and churches there perished in all above 2000 people; more than half died by the fall of the two churches.

La-motta, a village of about 200 inhabitants, famous for the retirement of the citizens of Palermo there in the summer-time, was totally overturned on the 9th, a salt pool succeeding in its place.

Messina, a city of great trade, lofty buildings, and great riches, felt the shake on the 9th, and more than half the inhabitants fled to the fields; the rest betook themselves to their devotions in the several churches: the archbishop ordered 48 hours of prayer, and several processions, to appease the wrath of heaven. On the 11th, 26 palaces were overturned, and many timber houses: every body expected immediate death, and in vast multitudes ran to the cathedral, where the archbishop



bishop of Messina preached, and said Mass, and there-  
after gave absolution, as did all the priests through the  
rest of the city by the archbishop's command. After  
this every one made the best of the way they could, to  
escape the common danger, and betook themselves to  
the fields, where they were not out of hazard, through  
the violence of the thunder, lightning, and rain, that  
continued three days together: The chapel of the  
archbishop's palace is overturned, most of the churches  
shattered, but few people killed.

The tide was higher on the 10th by three foot than  
ever was known, and such a violent agitation of the  
water, that several ships and smaller vessels were  
drowned all along the coast of the island, and some  
even in the harbours.

In short, a more astonishing, a more universal, or a  
more swift destruction was never known. And Sicily that  
was one of the most beautiful, rich, and fruitful islands  
in the world, is now an heap of rubbish, and a continued  
desolation. The Loss of money, merchandize, houses,  
and lands, may modestly be computed at six millions  
of ducats: and it will take an age to repair the da-  
mages it hath made. The number of inhabitants pe-  
rished, may be safely reckoned to an 120,000 souls;  
and the bruised, and like to die, 20,000 more.

### *Of the Earthquake at Malta.*

**A**LL the account we have yet of the further ef-  
fects of this Earthquake, and the extent of it to  
the island of Malta, is in a letter from thence, dated Ja-  
nuary 16. published by authority. On the 9th instant  
about ten at night happened here an Earthquake, and  
another on the 11th at three in the afternoon: the last  
was so violent, and lasted so long, that every body  
thought the city would have been destroyed. The roof  
of the church of our lady de Pelay was thrown down,  
with part of that of St. Laurence: the church and  
college of the Jesuits also suffered very much: but the  
cathedral



cathedral and the church of la Gusmane received the greatest damage, and are so ruined, that they can hardly be repaired. Most of the houses are extremely shattered, and deserted by the inhabitants, who lie now in grottos, and under tents in the fields. The great master of the order was then abroad a hunting, and he and all his company were in great danger by the falling of a mountain near them. We cannot yet tell the particulars of the loss this island hath sustained, but only in general, that it is very great, and the consternation of the inhabitants inexpressible, which hath received a new addition by the sad accounts we have from Sicily, of the same calamity that hath befallen their island, in a more terrible manner.—Whereof I have given the most particular account yet extant.



*And now upon the perusal of this sad history, who that will consider it as a Christian, but may use the Psalmist's expression, Psal. 119. 120. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments?*

**G**OD expects we should be affected and awed by such providences.

Some duties of religion are always seasonable, and of constant obligation, that must mix with all our actions, and be regarded in every step of our daily walk: there are others which the providence of God doth particularly call us to, at one time more than at another: there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to rejoice: and every thing is beautiful in its season. Accordingly when God ariseth to shake terribly the earth, and punish the inhabitants thereof for their iniquities; when he girds on his sword to ride his circuit by national judgments; when other countries and people are made examples and warnings, and the growing atheism and profaneness amongst us, may make us  
justly



justly apprehend the like severity ; he expects that our temper and carriage should somewhat correspond and agree to his works of providence ; that when the lion roars, we should tremble ; when he stretches out his hand, and shakes his glittering sword, we should observe it, and fear. He expects that we should take the warning he gives us, by the calamities of others ; that we should lie in the dust, throw off our ornaments, put on sack-cloth, and prepare to meet him in the way of his judgments.

We are many ways obliged to this, in conformity to the best examples of holy men in the like case ; and by our love to God, and duty to him, who is displeased and provoked. Our sense of his dishonour, and due apprehensions of his displeasure, require this : our relation to those places and persons, who have been already made examples of divine severity ; our love to ourselves, and to our brethren in this part of the world, who are yet preserved, do all require this ; and call upon us to be found in such a frame, as the Psalmist here expresseth upon the like occasion, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

In the former verse he endeavours to excite his love to God, and resolved adherence to his precepts, by the consideration of the judgments executed on the wicked ; *Thou puttest away the wicked of the earth like dross, therefore I love thy testimonies.* And in this he makes another improvement of such instances of divine justice, to awaken an holy fear, and awe of God, *My flesh trembleth, &c.*

An extraordinary fear is often described in scripture, as having this effect of trembling : *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake, and the hair of my flesh stood up,* Job iv. 14, 15. The like you have expressed by the Prophet, upon God's denunciation of judgment ; *Hab. iii. 16. When I heard this, my belly trembled, my lips quivered, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in my flesh.*

When



When God lifts up his voice in threatening of judgment, and roars like a lion, ready to tear in pieces, *Who will not fear?* Amos iii. 8. Or when he displays his power, and manifests his justice, and appears with terrible majesty, in the execution of judgment upon others; who that hears of it will not tremble before him, and be afraid of his judgments?



## CHAP. I.

*The method of the following discourse. Instances of divine severity on others are not to be overlooked; whether in former times or of later date; on strangers, neighbours, friends, or enemies. They are proper to affect us with an awful fear of God: Earthquakes especially of all other judgments. The terror of such a judgment in part described: that it is the effect of sin.*

THE ground of my following discourse will therefore be this, *That the instances of divine severity upon others, should affect the serious observers of them, with an awful fear of God and his judgments.*

*First,* It is here implied, that we are not slightly to overlook the examples of God's severity upon others, but seriously to observe and consider them.

*Secondly,* That such instances are proper to affect us with an awful fear of God; especially the desolations that are made by terrible Earthquakes.

*Thirdly,* That this awe of God, and fear of his judgments, upon such examples of divine severity, is matter of duty unto all, that do observe and consider them.

*Fourthly,* How this may be applied, and improved by us, with reference to this city and nation.

*First,* It is here implied, *That we are not slightly to overlook the examples of God's severity upon others.* How often has God threatened and punished the secure and careless frame of such, as regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands? Isa. v. 11. Psal. xxviii. 5.



*He shall, for this reason, destroy them, and not build them up.* We are bid to remember, consider, and improve the ancient judgments of God upon the old world, and upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*: and, *2 Peter* ii. 4, 5, to remember the example of *Lot's wife*, and the several calamities that befel the *Jews* in the wilderness, and after their settlement in *Canaan*: the instances of God's justice upon them for their several provocations, are recorded as types and warnings unto us, *on whom the ends of the world are come*, who live in these latter days, under the gospel-dispensation, *1 Cor.* x. 6. 11. that we should not lust as they lusted, and murmur as they, nor tempt Christ as they. It is said of them whose carcases fell in the wilderness for their many repeated provocations, that they are our examples. God's severity against them is recorded for our use, *Heb.* iii. 18. Chap. iv. 11. God made them *ὑποβρυχμα*, an express example and representation of what should be done in others. Some shall smart, that others may fear. God hath further ends in the execution of judgments than we imagine: he intends them not only for acts but patterns: every judgment is a new lesson; and God doth not intend to punish only, but to teach, and warn, and instruct: he warns when he wounds, and strikes some, that others may be spared by taking warning. *When a scorner is punished, saith Solomon, the simple is made wise, Prov.* ii. 11. And we are more apt to be impressed by what we see executed, than by what is only pronounced in a threatening.

The judgments of God on neighbouring countries and people are mentioned to this purpose for our improvement, *Zeph.* iii. 6, 7, 8. *I have cut off nations,* says God, (I have hanged them up as on a gibbet, to instruct and warn you by their ruin.) *Their towers are desolate, their streets are waste, so that no man passeth by; their cities are destroyed, that there is no inhabitant. Hereupon I said, Surely thou wilt fear me, surely thou wilt receive instruction.*

This



This therefore does suppose the observing and laying such things to heart.

We ought not easily to pass over and forget the works of God, especially when by the terribleness and severity of them, he has made them *fit to be remembered*, Psal. cii. 4. They are testimonies to a divine providence, and as such should be recorded. It is taken notice of to this purpose by <sup>6</sup> a learned and great man, as a defect among christians, that there is not yet extant an *historia nemeseus*, a judicious, impartial, and well attested history of the divine vengeance, containing the most remarkable monuments of God's justice in the world.

When he afflicts and plagues any of our neighbours, or brethren, or but strangers, in an eminent manner, we are called to consider his doings, that we may *learn righteousness, when the judgments of God are abroad in the earth*, Isa. xxvi. 9. It is but fit that the punishment of some should make other sinners tremble. As when Ananias and Saphira were struck dead, it is said, *Great fear fell upon all that heard those things*, Acts v. 11. It is mentioned as a fault, that when the hand of God is lifted up, men will not see and consider it: and for this stupidity God often expresseth his displeasure, Psal. x. 5. Psal. xxviii. 4, 5. Isa. v. 12, 13. Job xxxiv. 26. Micah vi. 9. We are commanded to take notice of his powerful justice in such examples, Rev. vi. 1. Psal. lxvi. 3. *Come and see the works of God, he is terrible in his doings towards the children of men.* He is said to visit us, and come nigh to us in judgment as well as in mercy: and shall he visit us, and we not take notice of it, or observe him? We cannot otherwise make a due improvement of them, in order to suitable duty.

Especially should it be thus, when any of our brethren, of the same nation with us, meet with any more than ordinary rebuke of providence, as is the case of Jamaica: not but that we ought to eye and own God,

<sup>6</sup> Verulam de augment. scient. l. 2. c. 11.



tho' the instances of his severity be more remote, as in the late extraordinary Earthquakes in Sicily. Yea, the execution of God's righteous judgments on the wicked, will make the righteous that see it, to fear and tremble, Psal. lii. 6. *The righteous doth wisely consider the house of the wicked, how God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness*, Prov. xxi. 12. All the great displays of God's justice in the world, are fit to be registered and remembered by us, as testimonies to us of his being, holiness, and righteous government. *Come hither, says God, and behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth*, Psal. xlii. 8.

Secondly, As we must observe and consider these instances of God's severity upon others, so they are very proper to affect us with an holy awe and fear of God. He owns himself the author of all the desolations wrought in the earth. Earthly princes will have matters of favour derived from themselves, but all acts of severity they put off to subordinate agents. But God will not stand on such points, he rather professeth to lay claim to all the memorable acts of vengeance upon sinful nations and people. It is he that shakes terribly the earth, and rends the rocks, and makes the mountains tremble; who overturns cities and countries, as in an instant; who swallows up many hundreds and thousands of persons and families at once: And shall not we who hear of it, stand in awe of him? We should say on such an occasion, who hath an arm like God? We should consider, who can stand before him when he is angry! Who can contend with him? Who would not tremble in his presence? He who can cast soul and body into hell in a moment, can as soon cause his earth to open, and swallow up the strongest, the largest, the most populous city upon earth, and turn it into a heap of ashes, or a pool of water; Ought not this God to be feared?

When his right hand does teach him terrible things, shall not the question then be put, as Job xii. 9. *Who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord has wrought this?*

When



When he shakes the heavens, and melts the mountains, and cleaves the valleys, as wax before the fire, and as water poured down a steep place, Micah i. 4. he seemeth to say, *I will work, and who shall let? I will destroy, and who shall save?* I will lay my hand, says God, upon Egypt, and I will bring my people thence by my great judgments. And it follows, *The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord*, Exod. vii. 4, 5. The greatness and terrible-ness of the calamity, in such cases, bespeaks God to be the author of it. Man cannot but take notice of his hand, and inquire, *Wherefore has the Lord done this, and what means the heat of this great anger?* Deut. xxix. 24. With God is terrible majesty, he is almighty, we cannot find him out. — *Men do therefore fear him*, Job xxxvii. 22, 23, 24.

When he makes the mountains tremble, and the earth shake, our hearts should tremble too. *Fear ye not me, says the Lord? and will ye not tremble at my presence?* Jer. v. 22. Will ye not fear me who can open the cataracts of heaven above, or break up the fountains of the great deep below, and pour forth whole floods of vengeance when I please? Who can rain hail out of heaven, or kindle those exhalations and steams that are in the bowels and caverns of the earth, (as I cause thunder by giving fire to those in the clouds) and make them force their way, to the overthrow and destruction of villages, and towns, and cities, and countries, whenever I will? Who can thus suddenly turn a fruitful populous land, into an amazing spectacle of desolation and ruin?

If God but write bitter things upon the wall against Belshazzar, his loins are loosed, and his Knees knock one against another. The great emperor Caligula runs under the bed at the noise of God's tabernacle, his thundering voice. And certainly God's shaking the earth, in so terrible a manner as of late, may much more make us tremble. To this purpose it is elegantly described by the prophet, Isa. xxiv. 17, 18, 19, 20. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he*  
who



*who fleeeth from the noise of the fear, shall fall into the pit ; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit, shall be taken in the snare : for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly ; the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage ; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it ; and it shall fall, and not rise again. Upon such manifestations of divine power and justice, we may well cry out, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty ! Who would not fear thee, and glorify thy name, when thy judgments are thus manifest ?* Rev. xv. 3, 4.

Such a judgment as this of Earthquakes, is especially proper to affect us with an awful fear of God, of his majesty and power, his greatness and dominion, his sovereignty and justice. He caused the mountain to quake at the delivery of the law, when he would prove to the Jews that he was their Lord and Sovereign. When the centurion observed the Earthquake, at the death of Christ, he, and others, feared greatly, saying, truly this was the Son of God.

To this purpose we may consider the Earthquake that did hinder the attempt of rebuilding the <sup>4</sup> Jewish temple, which the emperor Julian set a-foot to spite the Christians, and to contradict the prophecy of our Saviour, and to oppose Moses unto Christ. He gave all encouragement to the Jews, he provided them with all materials at his own charge. They with great joy and readiness set about it. But when they began to search the ground, in order to the laying of the foundation, the earth round about trembles with a horrible Earthquake, and the flames on a sudden break out, which not only consumed the undertakers, but a multitude of spectators too, and the materials prepared for the building. This made an universal astonishment, and struck

<sup>4</sup> Amm. Marcell. hist. l. 23. Chrysoft. Orat. 2. c. Jud. Synagoga, l. 3. c. 17. Sozomen, l. 5. c. 21.



Julian himself with some fear ; so that he gave over the attempt, and many of the Jews were perswaded to receive the faith of Christ. About the same time, the Pagan temple at Delphos was destroyed by Earthquakes, thunder and lightning. Such manifestations of his power challenge our fear. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke,* Nahum i. 5. *The mountains quake before him, and the hills melt; he removeth the mountains, and overturneth them in his anger; he shaketh the earth out of its place, and the pillars thereof tremble,* Job. ix. 5.

And the rather should we fear in such cases, because they are often set forth as God's judicial act. These fiery meteors are turned by God's counsel, for *correction and judgment*, Job xxxvii. *The earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the hills were moved and shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his Nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it,* Ps. xviii. 7, 8. *I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of its place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger,* Isa. xiii. 13. This is brought in, after God had said, ver. 11. *I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.* Again, *Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,* Psal. cxiv. 7. *Who can stand before his indignation, or abide the fierceness of his anger? His fury burns like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him,* Nahum i. 6. *Thou shalt be visited by the Lord of hosts, with thunder and with Earthquakes,* Isa. xxix. 6. that is, penaly, and judicially visited.

There are other Considerations, that should make this judgment of Earthquakes the more affecting: as, the little warning they are commonly attended with; and the surprizing effects that follow, able to astonish the most valiant men of war, and make the most courage-

See more of this in the following chapters.



ous spirits sink and fall : For so they are represented, as trembling on this account, 1 Sam. xiv. 15.

When the judgment comes unexpectedly, as a thief in the night : When God visits a people by terrible things in righteousness, and such as they looked not for : When, to use the prophet's words, *Isa. v. 14. Hell has enlarged itself, and opened her mouth without measure ; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth descends into it.* When there is no time to flee, or method to escape, or possibility to resist : when no sanctuary, or refuge remains ; no shelter is to be found in the highest towers, or the lowest cellars ; when the earth opens on a sudden, and becomes the grave of whole families, streets, and cities ; and effects this in less time than you are able to tell the story of it ; either sending out a flood of waters to drown, or vomiting out flames of fire to consume them ; or closing again upon them, that they die by suffocation, or famine, if not by the ruins of their own dwelling. When parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, magistrates, and ministers, and people, without difference or distinction, in the midst of health, and peace, and business, are buried in a common ruin, and pass all together into the eternal world ; and there is only the difference of a few hours or minutes between a famous city and none at all ; they that have been in the neighbourhood of such tragedies, and beheld the dismal effects of such a judgment on others, and yet have been preserved, cannot but consider it with trembling. Our own serious thoughts may help to affect us in like manner. Thus the late Earthquake at Jamaica happened in a clear day, without warning or suspicion ; and in the space of three minutes, the town of Port-Royal was shaken and shattered to pieces, and sunk into the sea, and the greatest part of it under water.

Now, if it be dreadful to have our country the seat of war, as they, whose case that is, will tell us, and we must presently grant ; this is yet more dismal, that,  
in



in the midst of peace, brings a worse ruin than the extremity of war. If a raging pestilence be dreadful, that sweeps away thousands in a day, and ten thousands in a night, as some of you can remember ; if a consuming fire be an amazing judgment, which you of this city have experienced ; an earthquake is not less, but more so ; when houses and inhabitants, towns and cities, and countries, are all destroyed at one stroke, in a few minutes. *Dat signum ruina* ; death is the only presage of such a judgment, without giving leisure to prepare for another world, or opportunity to look for any shelter in this.

Who doth not start at the thought of such a trembling of the earth ? The more a man knows, the more is his astonishment. *He hangeth the earth upon nothing*, Job xxvi. 7. For a man to feel the earth, which hangeth upon nothing, (but as some vast ball in the midst of a thin yielding air) totter under him, how can his soul choose but be possessed with a secret fright and confusion ? Methinks I tremble but to think of such a trembling.—

I design not, saith bishop *Hall* <sup>6</sup>, to astonish you with the relation of the fearful effects which earthquakes have produced in all ages, as it were easy to do out of histories, and philosophical discourses, where you may see rocks torn in pieces, mountains not cast down only but removed ; hills raised not out of valleys only, but out of seas ; fires breaking out of waters, stones and cinders belched up, rivers changed, seas dislodged, earth opening, towns swallowed up, and many other such hideous events. Of which kind our own memory can furnish us with many at home, altho' these colder climates are more rarely infested with such frightful accidents.

In what condition can a man be safe, saith *Seneca* <sup>7</sup>, speaking of Earthquakes, when the world itself is shaken ; and the only thing that passes for fixed and unmoveable in the universe, trembles and deceives

<sup>6</sup> Sermon on Psalm lx. 2.  
vi. c. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Epist. 23. Nat. Quæst. lib.



us? Whither shall we fly for security, if wherefo-  
 ever we are, the danger be still under our feet? Up-  
 on the cracking of an house, every man takes himself  
 to his heels; and leaves all to save himself. But what  
 retreat is there, where that which should support us;  
 when the foundation not only of cities, but even of  
 the world itself, opens and wavers? What help, or  
 what comfort, where fear itself can never carry us off?  
 An enemy may be kept at a distance with a wall; a  
 castle may put a stop to an army; a port may protect  
 us from the fury of a tempest; fire itself doth not  
 follow him that runs away from it; a vault may de-  
 fend us against thunder; and we may quit the place  
 in a pestilence; there is some remedy in all these  
 evils: or, however, no man ever knew a whole na-  
 tion destroyed by lightning. A plague may unpeople  
 a town, but it will not carry it away. There is no  
 evil of such an extent, so inevitable, so greedy, and  
 so publickly calamitous, as an earthquake: for it  
 does not only devour houses, families, and single  
 towns, but ruins whole countries and nations, either  
 overturning, or swallowing them up, without so much  
 as leaving any footstep or mark of what they were.  
 Some people have a greater horror for this death than  
 any other; *to be taken away alive out of the number of*  
*the living*: as if all mortals, by what means soever,  
 were not to come to the same end, death.—And 'tis  
 not a pin matter, whether I am crushed to pieces by  
 one stone, or by a whole mountain; whether I perish  
 by the fall of an house, or under the burden of the  
 whole earth; whether I be swallowed up alone, or  
 with a thousand more for company.

We should therefore arm ourselves against that  
 blow, that can neither be avoided or foreseen. And  
 it is not the forswearing those places that we find in-  
 fested with earthquakes, that will do our business;  
 for there is no place that can be warranted against  
 them. What if the earth be not yet moved? it is  
 still moveable: for the whole body of it lies under the

same



same law, and exposed to danger ; only some part at one time, and some at another. As it is in great cities, where all the houses are subject to ruin, tho' they do not all fall together, so in the body of the earth ; now this part fails, and then that. *Tyre* was formerly subject to earthquakes : in *Asia* twelve cities were swallowed up in a night : *Achaia* and *Macedonia* have had their turns, and now *Campania*. The fate goes round, and strikes at last where it hath a great while passed by. It falls out oftner, it is true, in some places than in others : but no place is totally free and exempt. And it is not only men, but cities, coasts, nay the shores, and the very sea itself, that suffer under the dominion of fate. And yet we are so vain as to promise ourselves some sort of assurance in the goods of fortune ; never considering that the very ground we stand upon, is unstable. And it is not the frailty of this or that place, but the quality of every spot of it ; for not one inch of it is so compacted, as not to admit many causes of its resolution. And tho' the bulk of the earth remain entire, the parts of it may yet be broken.'

Thus the pagan philosophers prepared themselves, and others, for these accidents, as for disorders that were inevitable ; and did not trouble themselves with the thought of divine justice, which chastiseth men by these dreadful punishments. But the common people, whose opinions were not so corrupted, revered the anger of heaven in these calamities ; and seeking for safety in superstition, endeavoured to appease the evil spirits by sacrifice, and so provoked the indignation of God the more. Christians, who are instructed in a better school, own these disasters as the punishment of sin.

And of all the animadversions that divine justice gives men, there is none more horrid, or less evitable than this of <sup>8</sup> Earthquakes. For what assurance can we hope for here below, if the earth quake under our

<sup>8</sup> Senault, of the corruption of nature by sin, Treat. 6. Disc. 7.



' feet? Where can we think to escape danger, if the  
 ' most solid thing of all the world do shake? if that  
 ' which sustains all other things about us, threaten us  
 ' with sinking under our feet? What sanctuary shall  
 ' we find to defend us from an evil that doth encompass  
 ' us round? And whither can we withdraw, if the  
 ' gulphs, which open themselves, shut up our passages  
 ' on all sides? With what Horror are men struck,  
 ' when they hear the earth groan, when her trembling  
 ' succeeds her complaints, when houses are loosened  
 ' from their foundations, when the roofs fall upon their  
 ' heads, and the pavement sinks under their feet?  
 ' What hope is there to be had in so general a disorder,  
 ' when fear cannot be fenced by flight? In other cases  
 ' there is some outlet whereby to escape an evil: an  
 ' enemy is beaten from the bulwark he had possessed  
 ' himself of; earthworks are opposed to the thunder-  
 ' ing cannon; winds, which raise tempests, deliver us  
 ' from them, and after having a long time tossed us to  
 ' and fro, they cast us on the shore: houses serve us for  
 ' sanctuaries against the injuries of the air and weather.  
 ' —If a man will resign his goods to the fire, he may  
 ' secure his person. Thunder hurts not those who hide  
 ' themselves in caverns. When the pestilence infects  
 ' whole cities, we may shun the contagion by going  
 ' into the country; and if it dispeople towns, it doth  
 ' not throw down the Houses. But an Earthquake in-  
 ' closeth what it overthrows; and wages war, not with  
 ' some few houses only, but whole provinces; and  
 ' sometimes leaves nothing behind it, to inform poste-  
 ' rity of its outrages: more insolent than fire, which  
 ' spares rocks; more greedy than the sea, which vo-  
 ' mits up shipwrecks; more cruel than the conqueror,  
 ' who spares walls: it swallows and devours whatsoever  
 ' it overturns.—The sea is subject to its empire; and  
 ' mariners confess, that those storms are most danger-  
 ' ous, which are occasioned by earthquakes.—

' This



' This misfortune is common to all kingdoms, since  
 ' man became criminal : all parts of the earth are be-  
 ' come moveable ; and stedfastness must no longer be  
 ' looked for in the world, since innocency is banished  
 ' thence by injustice. This disorder is the punishment  
 ' of our sin ; and reason, as well as faith, doth suffi-  
 ' ciently assure us, that the universe would never have  
 ' been agitated with these furious accidents, during the  
 ' state of original righteousness. Wherefore should  
 ' God's anger have armed the elements against his faith-  
 ' ful and obedient subjects ? Wherefore should he have  
 ' overthrown all his works, to destroy innocent men ?  
 ' Why should it have overwhelmed the inhabitants of  
 ' the earth with the ruins thereof, if they had not  
 ' been sinful ? Why should it have buried those in  
 ' the bowels of the earth, who were not to die ?  
 ' Let us then conclude, that Earthquakes are the ef-  
 ' fects of sin.'

Such sudden instances of divine judgment are threat-  
 ened in scripture as some of the most terrible ; and  
 therefore the highest severity is expressed by such un-  
 expected and sudden strokes : they are set forth some-  
 times by *the breach of a wall*, that catcheth a man ere  
 he be aware, and crusheth him in pieces, *Isa. xxx. 12,*  
*13.* Sometimes resembled to a *whirlwind*, that comes  
 suddenly, and carries all before it. And therefore  
 God threatens, that obstinate and incurable sinners shall  
 be *destroyed at once*, or shall be *suddenly destroyed, and*  
*that without remedy*, *Prov. xxix. 1.*

C H A P.



## C H A P. II.

*Such Instances of divine severity should teach us to reverence and adore the Divine power, and providence; should awaken us to repentance, excite most earnest prayer, occasion thankfulness for our preservation hitherto, and call upon us to trust in God as our only refuge, and to secure his favour.*

**L**ET us further consider, that under such appearances of God, it becomes us to be thus affected, as matter of duty. If we have any becoming apprehensions of the divine power, and the terrors of his wrath; if we have any concern at his displeasure, and the manifestations of it; if we have any thing of that tenderness of spirit, that heart of flesh, which is the great blessing of the new covenant, we ought to evidence it on such occasions, by suitable affections, in order to the improvement of these providences for our own advantage. For instance,

1. To reverence the divine Power and providence; to confirm our minds in the belief of it; *That verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth; that we may see, and know, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it: that God hath not forsaken the earth, but makes himself known by the judgments that he executes.* And when they are thus manifest, it is said, *All nations shall worship before thee, O Lord* Rev. xv. 4. and xix. 2. So when God executes judgment on the wicked, by sudden calamity, Psal. lviii. 7, 8, 9, it is added at the 11th verse, that thereupon a man shall say, *Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* If he did not sometimes appear in such acts of justice, men would be ready to say, *Where is the God of judgment?* Mal. ii. 17. or with them, Job ix. 24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;*



ed ; if not, where, or who is he ? Where is he, who should punish them ? Who is he, that calls them to an account ? And the wise man hath told us, that *because sentence against an evil doer is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*, Eccles. viii. 11.

But when he looketh on the earth, and makes it tremble ; when he toucheth the hills, and they smoke, Psal. civ. 32. When *he shows himself to be wise in heart, and mighty in strength, he removeth mountains, and they know it not ; he overturneth them in his anger*. Who would not then reverence his power, and providence ? Read Numb. xvi. for an instance of it.

Even the heathens have condemned those for mad men, and distracted, who would fear nothing, no not an Earthquake, as it is <sup>9</sup> observed by Aristotle, concerning the Celtæ, a barbarous people ; which makes it the more strange that Seneca <sup>1</sup> should be so much at a loss about the divine agency in such things, and ascribe them only to natural causes. Whereas Cicero <sup>2</sup> reckons Earthquakes, with thunder, tempests, &c. to be one of the four ways by which the notion of a God is preserved in the wor'd, and the minds of men awed with the apprehension of the divine Being.

By such acts of judgment and vengeance God is said *to show himself*, Psal. xciv. 1, 2, to confute the atheism of the world, and make man acknowledge his being and providence. By such things men are made to know, that *God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the earth*, Psal. lviii. 13. Thus was Pharaoh brought to acknowledge God, who at first despised him, saying, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him ?*

<sup>9</sup> Petri Victor. Comment. in Arist. de moribus, lib. 3. p. 160.

<sup>1</sup> Seneca Quæst. nat. lib. 6. cap. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero de Nat. Deorum, l. 2. § 13. mentions Cleanthes, and other of the Stoicks to be of the same opinion. See Lescloper, in Cic. de Nat. Deorum, p. 227.



2. Let us take heed of the like sins, that others have been guilty of, with whom God has dealt in such severity. Let us remember, he is a holy God, and jealous of his honour, and will not suffer high provocations always to go unpunished. Others have smarted, who were guilty of such and such transgressions, as are found amongst us; why should we expect to escape, if we continue under the like guilt? By judgments upon one nation, God warns another, that except they repent, they may expect to perish. Thus Tyrus *shall be devoured with fire*, Ashkelon (says God) *shall see it and fear*; Gaza and Ekron *shall be very sorrowful*, Zech. ix. 3, 4, 5. When Jonah was thrown over-board, and the storm quelled, the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered sacrifices, in the sense of their own sins. Much more, when God executes remarkable judgments on such as are notoriously wicked. All men will fear, and declare these works of God, if they wisely consider of his doings, Psal. lxiv. 9. If we will not be warned by the examples of others, we may expect to be made examples ourselves. Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain, are set forth as an example unto us, Jud. vii. *The man that will do presumptuously, even that man shall die*, Deut. xvii. 12, 13. *And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously*. God singled out the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, and those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, to tell the Jews, except they did repent, they should also perish: and, within a few years, upon their neglect of these instructive examples, thousands and ten thousands of them had their blood, as it were, mingled with their sacrifices; being slain by multitudes in the temple, the place of their offerings; and no less number perishing in the fall and ruin of their walls, and buildings battered down by the Romans. When the Israelites round about saw Korah and his company de-



devoured of the earth, they ran away at the cry of them, and said, lest the earth swallow us also.

By what we have seen of God's severity on others, we should run away trembling from the gulph of God's deserved judgments, by running from those sins, which may bring the like on us, which others have felt. 'Twas the great aggravation of Belshazzar's pride, that he humbled not himself, though he knew the judgment God had executed on his father for that very sin. He that will run into a bog, wherein others have plunged themselves, in his view, is guilty of double folly, of adventuring rashly, and of not taking warning. Herodotus tells us, that upon the statue of Zenacherib, after the angel of the Lord had slain *an hundred and eighty-five thousand of his army*, Isa. xxxviii. 36. it was engraven,

*Discite Justitiam moniti, & non temnere Divos :*

Let him that looks on me, learn to fear God.

He hath a thousand other judgments in reserve, if the same we see inflicted on others, do not overtake us. Not only stormy winds and tempests are in his treasury, that he can rain snares, and fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest on the wicked ; but he has arrows of judgment in his quiver of various sorts, or is able to repeat the same, when he pleaseth. God will never want ways and methods to punish a wicked people. All creatures in the earth, and air, and sea, are his servants. He hath hosts and armies of them, above and under ground, to be the instruments of his justice.

3. Let it excite our more earnest prayers for preservation, and deliverance from such judgments, as others have suffered by. We see, if God be not for us, but against us, how suddenly, how dreadfully he can punish, and destroy any people. How earnestly should we pray, Lord, spare thy people, and deliver



us from sudden death. The louder, and the more repeated our warnings are, and the juster our fears of approaching calamity, the more importunately should we pray, as that captain, 2 Kings i. 13, 14. When two before him, with their fifties, had been destroyed, fell upon his knees before the prophet, saying, *O man of God, let my life, and the lives of these fifty of thy servants be precious in thy sight: Behold there came fire from heaven, and burnt up the two captains with the former fifties; Q let my life be precious in thy sight.*

Let us pray for the diversion of such judgments, but endeavour to form our spirits to a preparedness for the whole good pleasure of God; and bring them to a conditional submission to the divine will, as to our own share in any national deliverance we pray for. We must own that we deserve, that the overflowing scourge should not pass away from us, and that we know not whether it shall or no; but we ought to pray always, Father, glorify thine own name, and help us to glorify it; and let us be pleased that thou shouldest do so, in thine own way; which we are not competent judges of. We lie at thy foot, and own that thou art just, and wise, and holy, and infinitely so: Lord, save us, if it be consistent with thy glory to save such a people; and help us to adore thee in the way of thy unsearchable judgments, if by that method thou wilt glorify thyself. We are not fit to judge of God's works of providence; nor can we comprehend how far his glory, in the accomplishment of his great and eternal purposes, may be subserved and promoted by such temporal calamities, as we would deprecate.

4. Let us thankfully own our present safety, our preservation hitherto, that when others have been destroyed, we are yet spared. God manifested glorious power in making the earth to shake; but it was free mercy that it did but shake and tremble in our island. His sovereign mercy has hitherto made a difference between us and other people: we are spared, when other

coun-



countries are destroyed. Let us stand, and behold the severity of God on them ; but adore his goodness unto us, that we are not surprized in our sins. He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. He is a God of truth, and without iniquity ; just and right is he. So we must own him in his most terrible judgments on others. But to us he is a God of patience and long-suffering, and so we must acknowledge and adore him. How did the Israelites triumph in the God of their salvation, when they escaped, and the Egyptians were drowned ? Why might not those of Jamaica and Sicily, have been warned by our example, as we are admonished by theirs ? How is it, that God has not enlarged, or repeated the commission of the Earthquake among us, that did but gently give us notice of what he might have done ? Let us bless God, that he did not shake the earth, so as to open and swallow us up quick ; and that he has not repeated it, because of our provoking security since : let us be thankful, that when our houses rolled, they did not tumble.

To some countries, and some people, he is known by the judgments that he executes ; but to us and ours by the judgments that he diverts. To us he is known by his adorable long-suffering, by his manifold deliverances, notwithstanding our repeated, aggravated crimes, so as to make us even the wonder of the world : for so we are, in that, having such enemies, and such national guilt, we have yet so many national blessings, to commemorate from time to time ; and the liberty of doing so in publick assemblies. God makes himself known to our neighbours round about, by the calamities of war, by the barbarity of soldiers, and the fury of the oppressor ; and to others in remote countries, by desolating earthquakes : but to us, by merciful preservations, and many of the blessings of peace. To Amalek, and Edom, and Babylon, he is known by destructive judgments ; but in Judah, and in Jerusalem, and in Sion his dwelling-place, he makes himself known in another manner. Though the pro-



feſſion of the truth, and the knowledge and worſhip of the true God in any place, is no ſufficient ſecurity againſt ſuch a judgment: for how terribly was Antioch (where the diſciples were firſt called Chriſtians) afflicted with Earthquakes; and ſome of the famous ſeven cities, whence the Aſian churches are denominated, deſtroyed by Earthquakes?

As to Antioch, we read, that in the emperor <sup>3</sup> Trajan's time, *A. D.* 115, or, according to others, *Anno* 111, who ſucceeded Nerva in the Roman empire, after his conqueſts in Armenia, and his obtaining the title of *Optimus*, he returned to Antioch, and there made ſome ſtay, but was affrighted with a moſt terrible Earthquake, which afflicted other cities, but eſpecially this, in an unheard-of manner. By the fall of houſes, and rubbiſh, and other means, a vaſt number of people periſhed; ſo that the town being full of ſtrangers, who came thither for law ſuits, upon meſſages, or other buſineſs, the court being then there all the winter, there was no nation, that received not loſs from ſo great a calamity. Trajan himſelf eſcaped out of a window, being, it is ſaid, drawn out by one of a more than human proportion. And though the Earthquakes ceaſed, he continued in the open air for many days. The hill Coraſius was ſo ſhaken, that its higher parts fell down, and it looked as if it would tumble on the city. Other mountains were levelled; waters broke out where none before appeared; and fountains which formerly poured out water, were ſtopped up.

About the ſame time, in Trajan's time, Oroſius <sup>4</sup> mentions 103 cities of Aſia overturned by Earthquakes. And, afterwards, in Juſtinian's time <sup>5</sup>, Cluverius mentions another Earthquake at Antioch, that deſtroyed above 40,000. And by <sup>6</sup> another Earth-

<sup>3</sup> Howel's General Hiſt. vol. 2. p. 883. Dion. Caſſ. Trajan. cap. 18. Dio Xiphilin. Le Sieur Hiſt. d el' Eglife, An. de. N. S. 115.

<sup>4</sup> P. Oroſii Hiſt. l. 7. cap. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Cluverius ad An. Dom. 528.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. ad An. Dom. 602.



quake there, sixty-one years after the former, in the time of the emperor Mauritius, 60,000 perished.

The preservation of our city and nation, while others were destroyed by this judgment formerly, and of late, should make us thankful. The like may be amplified as to particular families and persons : the bright side of the cloud is to thee, while the dark one is to others : as a God of justice and severity he appears to others, as a God of grace and compassion to thee.

How many salvations has God wrought for us of late, for this nation, and for this city ; prolonging our tranquillity and peace, and keeping off publick calamities from us ! How often has he disappointed and defeated our enemies designs and attempts against us ! It is well if our ingratitude do not, at last, provoke him to say, as to his ancient people, *Judg. x. 11. 12, 13. Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians ? &c. Yet you have forsaken me, therefore will I deliver you no more.*

6. Let it awaken us to clear up our interest in God, as our only refuge and shelter. If he be our God in covenant, we need not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be cast into the sea ; *though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof*, Psal. xlv. 1. Our hearts may be established and fixed, *trusting in the Lord*, so as *not to fear any evil tidings*, Psal. cxii. 7, 8. We may possess our souls in peace ; for God will keep them in *perfect peace, whose minds are stayed on the Lord*, Isa. xxvi. 3. They may say when it thunders, it is the voice of my Father, and when the earth trembles, it is the tread of his foot : or, with David, *The Lord is my refuge, the Lord is my habitation, what need I be afraid ?* Psal. xci. 9. A refuge is a place of retreat and safety in a time of war : an habitation is a place of abode in a time of peace : at all times and in all conditions such are provided for : the Lord is my  
D 3 biding-



*hiding-place and my shield*, therefore will *I hope in his word*, Psal. cxix. 114. He will either keep me out of danger, or defend me when I am exposed to it: either what I fear shall not overtake me, God will be m hiding-place; or, if it do come, it shall not hurt me, God will be my shield.

He has promised to be with me in the fire, and in the water: He has bid me not to be dismayed; *for I am with thee, I am thy God, I will strengthen and help thee, and uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness*, Isa. xli. 10. and xlii. 2. He will cover me with his feathers, and under his wings I shall be safe: I may abide under his shadow, and dwell safely from the fear of evil. Now it is one great end of such extraordinary appearances of God; to bring men to adore and seek after God: Joel ii. 30. *I will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, &c. before the great and terrible day of the Lord; and whosoever shall call on his name, shall be saved.*

Our business therefore is to make peace with God; to acquaint ourselves with God, and be at peace with him; and then good shall come unto us, and *the Almighty himself shall be our defence*, so as we need not fear, Job xxii. 21. Let what will come to pass, such shall be safe who are under the covenant-love and care of God. And it is his presence alone is able to secure us. Good men have always thought so, even when they had the greatest assistance for outward security: *O Lord, we rest on thee alone*, says *Asa*, 2 Chron. xiv. 8. When he had an army that bare targets and spears out of Judah, to the number of 300,000, and near as many out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, viz. 280,000; yet he overlooks all this, and rests on God alone. So did *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chron. xvii. 14, 15, 16, with an army of 1,160,000 fighting men, besides his garrisons; and yet chap. xx. 12. he says, *We have no might against those that come against us, but our eyes are*  
unto



unto thee. 1,160,000 fighting men in the field, and yet had no might but what he expected from the presence of God. All our stability and safety depends upon God as our keeper. If it be asked, is it in your armies, and officers, and commanders? they must say, no, it is not in us. Is it in your fleets, and navies, and admirals? It must be said, it is not in them. Is it in your allies and confederates? It must be said still, it is not in them. In your castles, and garrisons, and fortifications, in the situation of your country, or the numbers of your people? &c. It is not in them. In no human power, policy, cunning, correspondencies abroad, or councils at home; nothing but in God, who is the keeper of Israel; and therefore to be at peace with him is our only safety.

If he be our rock and refuge, we may depend on him, and find security; all other foundations and buildings are weak and tottering; but the foundation of God stands sure: The Lord knoweth who are his, and he can and will take care of them, though the earth tremble under your feet, or you sink into the bowels of it. He can own and distinguish you even in such a calamity, by a temporal salvation, as *An. 1585*, when a certain hill near Berne in Switzerland, was violently removed by an earthquake, and covered a whole village that had 90 families in it, one half house only excepted, wherein the master of the family was praying with his wife and children: <sup>6</sup> Polanus relates it, who lived in those parts. By an Earthquake at Constantinople, wherein 13,000 men perished, *An. 1509*, many of the Turkish mosques fell, but the Christian temples stood firm. <sup>7</sup> And other instances may be given of the like.

<sup>6</sup> Polani Syntagma, p. 841.

<sup>7</sup> *An. 1663.* in insula Canada horrendi terræ motus sentiuntur. Hæc tempestas ingentem Terrarum tractum infestavit: & Barbaros, Christianis interim incolumis, gravi damno affecit. Cluverius, p. 168.



God is an unchangeable refuge, and by interest in him we are sure of a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Though our earthly dwellings should be swallowed up, our souls are safe, our portion is secure : for when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved into dust, by that or any other calamity, yet shall we not miss of eternal blessedness in the heavenly mansions : And there are no storms or tempests, no commotions or tremblings there.



### C H A P. III.

*We ought not to censure others, because of such calamities, as greater sinners than those who escape : much less should we pass a judgment on their eternal state, because they are cut off suddenly by a temporal judgment.*

**T**O apply this : 1. Let us not then excuse or encourage ourselves, by censuring others, as greater sinners than we, on whom more terrible judgments have been inflicted : for except we repent, we must also perish. This is the express declaration of Christ, upon the account given him of those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, and of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, *Luke xiii. 5.* As to these Galileans their crime is not certain : some think they brought this judgment upon themselves by their sedition, as conspiring against the Roman Government ; intermixing some acts of religion as the bond of their conspiracy ; which Pilate hearing of, surprized them in the act, and put them to death : others think they were the followers of Judas of Galilee, mentioned *Act v.* who seduced many from their obedience to the Roman emperor ; and that they were Jews coming up to the passover to sacrifice, and there he fell upon them. Others suppose them to be Samaritans, and that they were slain, worshipping in their temple



temple on mount Gerizim ; but called Galileans, from Judas the head of the faction: and the hatred of the Jews against the Samaritans might occasion that severe and bitter censure. Whatever the occasion was of their sufferings, our Lord condemns the censure of them as greater sinners on that account ; for tho' sometimes men guilty of provoking sins, are followed with such remarkable judgments, that it would be stupid impiety not to observe the hand of God therein, as in the case of Herod, *Acts* xii. &c. yet God may choose out some to be examples and warnings to others, who are not greater sinners than they. 'Tis true, some mens sins are so visible, as to be open before-hand, going before to judgment, as the apostle speaks, *1 Tim.* v. 26 (They are *πεφανεροι*, manifest to the judgment of all men, before they come to be laid open at the last day: they go to judgment before the sinners themselves are brought thither.) When such notorious crimes are followed with extraordinary punishments, the connection and relation between them must not be denied : but otherwise we should judge charitably of the sufferers.

We must not make a rash and hasty judgment of the providences of God, or interpret the voice of his rod by uncertain guesses of our own. We may easily be too curious in prying into the secrets of providence ; for his judgments are a great deep ; and of many of them we may say with Asaph, when I thought to know this, it was too wonderful for me. He hath not thought fit to give us a full account of all his designs and ends, why such who are not greater sinners than others, are sometimes punished more. In such enquiries we shall soon get out of our depth, so as to swim in dissatisfaction, or sink into distrust, if we suffer our curiosity to stretch itself too far.

Therefore after Solomon had told us, *Eccles.* vii. 15. that there is a just man who perishes in his righteousness, and a wicked man on the contrary who prolongeth his life in his wickedness ; he adds in the next verse, *Be not righteous over-much, nor make thyself over-*  
*wise :*



*wife*: that is, do not think thyself more righteous than the person to whom such a judgment befalls; nor make thyself over wise, *i. e.* do not pretend to be able infallibly to expound this riddle, and to know the meaning of divine providence in such a dispensation; for *one event may befall the righteous and the wicked*, Eccles. ix. 11. The great apostle may have his hand arrested with a viper; and yet none but Barbarians would conclude, upon that account, that he is followed with divine vengeance, Acts xxviii. 4.

We read of 27,000 killed by the fall of a wall at Aphek, 1 Kings xx. 30. As sometimes appeals have made to God in the high places of the field, and yet the success of the war hath not always been on the juster side. The Benjamites were engaged in an ill cause, and yet were victorious over the other tribes, Judg. xx. The ark of God hath been taken by the Philistines. Children are sometimes cut off for the sins of parents, as 1 Kings xv. 30. chap. xvi. and xvii.

God acts as a sovereign in these things. The sucking infants of Babylon must perish by the sword, and their brains be dashed out: and the little children of Sodom and Gomorrah were burnt with their parents, by fire from heaven: concerning which God saith, Ezek. xvi. 20. *I took away young and old, as I saw good.* He doth what he pleaseth, and who can say unto him, *What dost thou?* He doth not think fit to give us now a full account of all his matters, or to say all that he can in justification of his present providence, Job xxxiii. 13. Isa. xlvi. 9. Dan. iv. 34. But the great *day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*, will unriddle all these things, and scatter all those clouds, and remove all those difficulties that now puzzle us.

Much less should we conclude concerning their eternal state, who are cut off by some temporal judgment. We have no warrant or authority to sit as coroners on the souls of deceased persons. It would be very uncharitable to conclude, that all the Israelites were shut out of heaven, who died in the wilderness, and by the  
righteous



righteous judgment of God were not permitted to enter into Canaan : or that the inquisitive Bethshemites, or Uzza, and others that have been struck dead for unwarrantable actions, did perish to eternity. There is a veil of darkness upon many such works of providence : but *what we know not now, we shall know hereafter*, John xiii. 7. Good Josiah may die in a battel as well as wicked Ahab ; and Nebuchadnezzar may have a prosperous reign of 40 years as well as David. Eternal love and hatred are not known by these things. We must not conclude a man to be certainly wicked, because he is cut off by a sudden death, or doth not go to his grave in peace.

*Think not, says Christ, that they were greater sinners than others*, who were thus suddenly and exemplarily cut off ; that is, you cannot for that reason, and barely on that account, so suppose and judge of them. He doth not deny that they were greater sinners, but only asserts that their greater sufferings will not prove that they were so : for it is agreeable enough to the wisdom of divine government, (or of any government) that, when many persons are equally guilty, some may be selected to be examples and warnings to others, when others no less criminal are spared. Other nations, as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah, have not been destroyed by fire from heaven. We must adore divine justice in the punishment of a wicked people, but his sovereignty must be owned in the choice of subjects. We should be very partial to ourselves, and uncharitable to our neighbours and brethren, if we conclude them to be greater sinners than we, because they have suffered more. I repeat this, as knowing that we are very apt to condemn such persons, who are thus examples in suffering, and to hug ourselves as more righteous than they, because we are spared.

But as to ourselves, and our own case, we ought to know that God will not always bear to have his merciful warnings contemned, to have numberless extraordinary



dinary mercies abused, to have lesser judgments upon us, and his more remarkable severity upon others, disregarded, We ought still to remember and consider it, that, *Except we repent, we are like to perish.*



#### C H A P. IV.

*What fear of evils to come is lawful, how far a duty, and when sinful. Of the penal fear of future calamity: instances of it as a divine punishment. What little ground we have to expect a much longer reprieve; we have none for security and confidence. The doubtfulness of our case should awaken our utmost concern and care to prevent destruction.*

2. **L**ET us therefore apprehend the case to be exceeding hazardous as to our city and nation; when we have had so many warnings, and are not awakened to repentance and reformation. Besides the natural fear of approaching evil, which is not to be condemned as a fault, because inevitable, there is a sinful fear of evils to come, and of the tidings of them; proceeding either from ignorance of God, forgetfulness of his care, or distrust of his providence, or as unsuitable to the nature, kind, and degree, and duration of the evils we apprehend: such a fear, as hinders us in the performance of our present duty, that infeebls our spirits, and weakens our hands as to the use of lawful means; or puts us upon the use of prohibited unlawful ones: such a fear, as takes off the sweetness of our present mercies, by the apprehension and fear of future evil; whereby we reflect upon God's government, and overlook his promises of support and deliverance, and become unprepared to encounter the evils, that we may be called to suffer.

However,



However, there is a fear of probable, threatened, and approaching calamity, that is both allowable and commendable; a fear of caution and circumspection, to excite us to prepare for the worst; to put on our armour, and make provision for an evil day. David wanted such a fear, when he said within himself, that his mountain was so strong that it could not be moved, Psal. xxx. 6. It is such a fear, as is opposite to sinful presumption and hardness of heart. And therefore *blest is the man that feareth always*, in this sense, Prov. xxviii. 14. But he that is fearless, and hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief. We may and ought so far to fear, and apprehend the possibility, and sometimes the likelihood of bearing our share in the like sufferings, as our brethren feel, so as may prevent our security, and settling on our lees, and a foolish confidence, that the cup of trembling, which our brethren have drunk so deep of, shall never be put into our hands.

It may farther be considered, that there is also a penal fear of future evils, which God inflicts as a punishment on such with whom he is displeased: Deut. xxviii. 64, 65. *The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other; and there thou shalt serve other Gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.* The wicked nations which inhabited the promised land, were driven out by such fears: for these seem to be the hornets, that God sent amongst the Canaanites, and Amorites, to drive them out of the land, Josh. xxiv. 11, 12. Exod. xxiii. 27, 28. There are many expressions to this purpose in the book of Job, chap. xv. 21, 22, 24. and xviii. 5. Jer. vi. 25. and xx. 2. and xlix. 29. *Isa.* xxviii. 2. compared with 2 Kings xvi. begin. Jer. xxii. 1. *Ezek.* xxx. 9, 10.

But this is quite another thing from what I am persuading to: for we have probable grounds to fear, what God



God may do as to this nation and city: we have looked for peace, that great comprehensive blessing, and *as yet no good comes*: we are engaged in a war, that none can tell how, or when it shall be determined. We look for a *time of healing*, but our physicians hitherto have been *of little value*: our wounds are not healed, and we know not when they will: tho' we have much to be thankful for, we have cause enough to be humbled, and to fear: rejoice we may, on some accounts, but yet *rejoice with trembling*.

Though God be long before he comes to take vengeance; tho' he may reprieve us for a little while longer, tho' he have done so wonderfully hitherto, beyond what we could expect; yet we cannot thence conclude, that he will *always spare*, that he will not strike. The confidence of some in our forces and confederates, and fleets and armies; so many tried soldiers, and such accomplished officers, and experienced generals, and mighty preparations by sea and land; and the confidence of others, upon bold interpretations of scripture prophecies, with particular application of them to our island, are not of weight enough, to hinder our fears from being just. God may suddenly cover the heavens with darkness, and confute all our vain presumptions in a month or two, when we expect it not.

What God has done against others, he may as righteously do against us, if we despise his judgments, and go on in the like sins. *Behold, ye despisers, wonder, and perish*, Acts, xiii. 41. Behold what I have done in other places, and can do against you: *For I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you*. Men little thought that Jerusalem should have been destroyed, as it was, as little as we expect England, or London, to be a scene of calamity. But we may live to see such effects of it, as may make our eyes and hearts fail, before God has completed his work. *Lam. ii. 18, 19.*

If the prophet cried, *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the heart, my heart maketh a noise within me;*

*I can-*



*I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarum of war, Jer.*

iv. 19. Much more may we say so of the fear of an earthquake, which is unspeakably more terrible ; when every man sinks with his own house, as his sepulchral monument ; when the roofs fall upon our heads, and the floors cleave under our feet ; and, whether by day or night, tables, and beds, are suddenly crushed into the disorders of a grave, and the inhabitants perish at once with their habitations.

I know the most do not love to hear of such things, but peace and plenty, victory and success, liberty and prosperity ; and they are ready to say, you discourage and dishearten men. But if a city or town be on fire, or like to be so, must we not discourage men by telling of it ? It is true, God may save us by prerogative ; but if he proceed by common law, according to the common rules by which he has acted towards other nations, we must repent, or may expect to be destroyed.

God now seems to call us to weeping, and mourning, and sackcloth, and ashes ; but how little of such a spirit is found amongst us ? *Behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, saying, Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die, Isa. xxii. 12, 13.* But what follows in ver. 14. *It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, says the prophet, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, says the Lord of Hosts.*

If the matter be doubtful, whether God will preserve and save us or no, the very possible supposition that he may not, should awaken a most serious concern. Is there but an *it may be* that the Lord will be gracious and spare us ? Is it uncertain ? Is there but a peradventure ? Cannot we tell whether the Lord will turn from his fierce anger against us, or no ? How should we be concerned to look about us ! What if our unthankfulness, and profaneness, and formality, and divisions, our unwillingness to be healed, after all the overtures and opportunities that have been before us ;  
what



what if our infidelity and Sadducism, gross impurities, and more provoking gospel-sins, should make God resolve to cast us off, and call this island, that has been Immanuel's land so long, *Lo-ammi, Lo-ruamah*, a people forsaken of the Lord? What if England, Scotland, and Ireland, should be a seat of war and a field of blood, as well as other parts of Europe, that never sinned against such light, such warnings, and such obligations as we have? What if a sudden Earthquake should swallow up a great part of these countries, as it hath of others? Why may not the very dregs of the cup be reserved for us, who have been incorrigible under all the methods of divine providence to reform us? What certainty have we that it shall not be so? Where is the ground of our confidence? What assurance have we that God will spare much longer? What strong reasons can we produce for the entail of liberty, peace, and plenty? There needs no Spirit of prophecy to declare our danger, considering our guilt, but a more serious, and more general spirit of humiliation, prayer, and reformation to be poured out, to prevent it.

God has waited long, and tried us by various methods of mercy and judgment; he has manifested how loth he is to destroy us, and therefore gives us many admonitions and items, formerly, and of late. He calls loud and often, by manifold warnings; he lifts up his hand on high, as if he would strike, that we might turn to the Lord, and prevent it: he shakes the city and threatens the nation, but has not yet delivered us over to utter ruin. He tells us, by the examples of others, what he can do with us, and what we may expect if we will go on. He doubles and trebles his messages by the voice of his prophets, and by the voice of his providence. He calls us by what he hath done abroad, and by what he hath done at home, to repent and turn to the Lord, lest iniquity prove our ruin: but have we not reason to fear that all his kindness and patience has but hardened us the more, and rendered us the more incorrigible, and ripe for ruin? We continue

our



our rebellions against him, as if we were sure he would never be weary of repenting.

Being often reprov'd, and warn'd, and deliver'd, and yet impenitent, ought we not to fear, lest we be *suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy*? How many countries and cities have been so? How many former instances, and later ones, may be mentioned? And if we are spared, it is mere sovereignty and prerogative.



## CHAP. V.

*Of God's unwillingness to destroy a people. Hosea xi. 8, 9. explained, paraphrased, and applied to our nation and city: How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? &c. Abraham's pleading with God for Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. xviii. Moral causes why we may expect and fear national and publick calamities.*

IT is the language of divine providence to us, as to his ancient people, Hof. xi. 8, 9. *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the Holy One of Israel, in the midst of thee.* He denounced dreadful judgments for their ingratitude, ver. 5, 6, 7. but when it comes to the execution, he is loth to destroy; *How shall I give thee up?* To which it is answered, 'My heart is turned within me, my heart is turned against that determination of judgment I seem'd to resolve on; or my heart is re-  
'turned to pity and compassion, that I cannot execute  
'my threatened vengeance.' *How shall I deliver thee up, O Israel?* To which it is answered, 'My repentings  
'are kindled together; that is, my bowels yearn to-  
'wards you still: as little as you deserve any favour or



‘ compassion at my hands, I am inclined to reprove  
 ‘ and spare you a while longer, to give you space and  
 ‘ and time to repent.’ *How shall I make thee as Admah,*  
 one of the cities of the plain, that was utterly destroyed  
 with fire and brimstone from heaven, with Sodom and  
 Gomorrah? Unto which it is answered, ‘ *I will not ex-*  
 ‘ *ecute the fierceness of mine anger,* as I did against that  
 ‘ *wicked city.*’ *How shall I set thee as Zeboim?* another  
 of those wicked cities, *which the Lord overthrew in his*  
*anger and his wrath,* Gen. xix. 24. To which it is an-  
 swered, ‘ *I will not return to destroy Ephraim, I will not*  
 ‘ *make a full end of him, for I am God and not man;* not  
 ‘ of an hasty, passionate, revengeful temper, as men  
 ‘ who are injured and affronted, and provoked by one  
 ‘ another. I delight in mercy, *I have the patience of a*  
 ‘ *God as well as the power;* and *therefore you are not*  
 ‘ *consumed,* Mal. iii. 6. *I am the Holy One of Israel,* a  
 ‘ God in covenant with your fathers, and have promised  
 ‘ to be so with their posterity: I am the Holy One of  
 ‘ Israel, *in the midst of thee:* you are called by my name,  
 ‘ and I am yet amongst you by the tokens of my pre-  
 ‘ sence; I am therefore loth to leave you, utterly to  
 ‘ leave you to destruction.

You have the like expression, Hos. vi. 4. *O Israel,*  
*what shall I do unto thee? O Juda, what shall I do unto*  
*thee? for your goodness is as the morning cloud, and the*  
*early dew, that passeth away:* that is, ‘ I am loth to  
 ‘ punish you with destructive judgments, but what  
 ‘ shall I do to prevent it? *O Israel, O Judah,* what  
 ‘ would you have me to do? Would you have me ne-  
 ‘ glect the honour of my government, and be an idle  
 ‘ spectator of all the affronts that you have offered me?  
 ‘ Must I repeal my law, and throw aside my sceptre,  
 ‘ and tamely suffer the rights of my throne to be in-  
 ‘ croached on, and trampled under foot? Must I re-  
 ‘ solve to suffer you to go on in your hypocrisy, and  
 ‘ idolatry, and shameful backslidings, without testi-  
 ‘ fying my displeasure? I have done much to warn  
 ‘ you, to awaken you, to reform you, to prevent your  
 ‘ ruin.



ruin. I am inclined to pity, I am unwilling to destroy : but, *O Israel, what shall I do unto thee ?* You will not be purged, you will not be healed, you will not be gathered, *you will die.* And yet mercy interposes again, before the stroke is given ; *How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim ?* Must I, after all, give orders for thy destruction ? *How shall I do it ?* Tho' thou deservest to be forsaken by my mercy, which thou hast abused, and seized by my justice, which thou hast provoked, yet how shall I find in my heart to permit it ? Though I can hardly tell how to bear with thee any longer, or with honour to my name and government, to delay the execution of that destructive vengeance, threatened on my part, and deserved on thine ; yet, *O Ephraim, my dear son, how shall I give thee up ? O Israel, the posterity of my ancient friend Jacob, how shall I deliver thee over to final ruin ?*

In answer to this, says God, *' My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together ; i. e. I find such strugglings of compassion in my heart towards thee, that I know not how to execute what I have threatened : my repentings are kindled, I begin to repent of the evil that I had threatened to inflict : or my repentings are kindled together ; that is, all the thoughts and arguments that might persuade me to repent of my threatened wrath, and keep back destruction, they are all mustered together, to prevent the stroke.'*

Thus does the blessed God condescend to bespeak us *after the manner of men*, and like a tender-hearted and compassionate parent, who is loth to disinherit even a rebellious and disobedient son. His kindness contends against his anger ; his mercy pleads against his justice ; the one denounceth wrath, the other begs a reprieve ; the one threatens desolation, the other interposes to prevent it : *My heart is turned within me, and my repentings are kindled ;* therefore I will not give thee up, I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will



not return to destroy Ephraim, I will not make a full end of him ; for *I am God and not man*, &c.

God has evidenced this to us, and others, by undeniable proofs, in that notwithstanding the provocations of a people, he is ready to repent of his threatened judgments upon their repentance, and return to him ; and likewise in that, before he gives up such a people to destruction, he gives them frequent warnings by his messengers, and by his lesser judgments ; yea, though his warnings are slighted, and his calls rejected, yet he doth not presently destroy, but waits with much long-suffering, giving them time and space to repent ; and sometimes appears to give unexpected deliverance, even *for his own name sake* ; and doth also spare and preserve a remnant, in the most general destruction : and even, at last, doth not willingly abandon such a people to utter ruin, but with reluctancy and regret, so far as is consistent with the unchangeable purity and blessedness of the Divine Majesty.

Like a compassionate judge, who doth not willingly pass the sentence of condemnation : if you will not repent, you must perish : if you will not be reformed you must be undone : if you will not take warning, you must be forsaken. *But, O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up ? O Israel, what shall I do unto thee ? O that they knew the things that belong unto their peace, before they be hid from their eyes !* He signs the warrant, as it were, for their execution ; and then he retracts the order again : he gives commission for their destruction, and then recalls it, and proves them yet a little longer. If that will not do, but justice renews her plea for vengeance, then mercy interposes for a delay.

It was on this account God permitted Abraham to plead with him so familiarly for Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain ; God lets him say all that he could, he grants him every thing he would have : if there be but *fifty righteous persons*, wilt thou not spare them ? Gen. xviii. *Yes*, saith God, *I will* : But, *Lord*, peradventure there be *forty*, is not that number sufficient ?



cient? *Yes*, says God, that shall do, if there be but *forty*. But, *Lord*, it may be there are but *twenty*, wilt thou not spare them for their sakes? *Yes*, for the sake of *twenty* I will, says God. Once more let me beg, *Lord*, if there be but *ten*? *Ay*, if there be but *ten* righteous persons, I will spare them. God was willing to hear the utmost Abraham could urge on their behalf, as if he would have been glad to have met with an argument that might dissuade him from so unpleasing a work. God grants him so often, and so long, till the holy patriarch was ashamed to ask any further, or plead any longer. So backward was God to destroy, and so unwilling to give up a people to utter ruin; and that too, though such a wicked people as Sodom and Gomorrah.

In the iv. of Amos you find God impeached the impenitence of that people under various warnings, and lesser judgments; and mentions the aggravation of each affliction, five several times, yet have you not returned unto me saith the Lord. Thereupon, to awaken them to repentance, to prevent their ruin, he pronounceth the riddle of a doom, *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel*; not mentioning what he would do, Thus will I do unto thee. Thus, as I have done unto other places, or worse than I have ever done to any; thus will I do unto thee. It is a relative without an antecedent; it is a locked cabinet, and treasure of judgment, without a key to open us a view of particulars. No judgment is expressed, that all may be feared; and all to be feared, that none may be felt: *Therefore prepare to meet thy God, O Israel*.

We have a great deal of reason not to be secure, notwithstanding God's unwillingness to destroy. National judgments are deserved, and threatened, and may be justly feared; and nothing but repentance, reformation, prayer, and union, and such other methods as are despised and neglected, can secure, or preserve us.



This is certain, that no situation of our country, (or any country, whether an island or continent) can be our safety, if God be against us. For what can preserve us from an Earthquake, or a thousand other methods of judgment, which God can employ? All that men expect succour, and deliverance, and protection from, is in vain, if God be not engaged on our behalf. All those things that we can trust to, are but cyphers, if God be not on our side.

The Assyrian trusts in his mighty army, numerous enough to drink up a river, Isa. xxxvii. 24. and yet the next news we hear of him, is, that God sends an angel, and cuts off near 200,000 in one night. No courage or valour, numbers or strength, can avail in a time of war: no skill or policy, (of the truth of this every age affords instances:) no external relation to God by church-privileges, whereof the Jews are a sad example; no, nor any former deliverances God hath wrought for us, are a ground of security for the future, without a thankful, and a holy improvement of them. Not many years after the preservation of the city of Niniveh, that city and people were destroyed. So it is threatned, Josh. xxiv. 20. *If you forsake the Lord, he will turn against you, and do you hurt, and consume you, even after he hath done you good.* The like is threatened, Deut. xxviii. 63. *If you forsake the Lord, he will rejoice over you to destroy you, as he rejoiced over you to do you good.* Though a city be defended by rocks and mountains, as Edom was; yet the strength and situation of a place, is no preservative against divine judgment.

In two or three moments many thousand, yea many hundred thousand people may be swallowed up by a sudden Earthquake, tumbling alive into one common grave, buried before they are dead, with miserable cries, and groans, and shrieks, till their breath be stopped. And whatever the wickedness of other places may have been, who have smarted by such judgments, the aggravations



of our sins in England, and London are such, as may make us fear the like, or worse.

If they were nothing but the misimprovement of our past mercies, we had reason to fear it : for what blessing is there more than ordinarily valuable, but we have had ; If peace, if plenty, if victory, if the Gospel, we have had it. But what unanswerable returns have we made, under all such obligations ? All the ways by which eminent mercies are abused, and God provoked, we have practised. Some of these we have not valued at all ; others we have soon forgotten : as to some, we have given the praise and glory not to God, but to ourselves, or our friends, or the instruments of conveyance ; some (I fear the most) of these blessings we have misemployed to the dishonour of God, and therefore our very mercies may make us tremble.

Yea, further, that drowsiness and security, and spirit of slumber, that hath seemed to seize the generality of professors amongst us at this day, is a just ground for our present fears ; i. e. the general unconcernedness about the state and posture of things amongst us, with relation to god's presence or departure. It cannot be well with such a people, they cannot but be in exceeding hazard, who when their neighbour's house is consumed to ashes, or is yet on fire, are fast asleep on their beds. For this God threatens to search Jerusalem with candles, to punish the men that are settled on their lees, who said in their hearts, *the Lord will not do good or evil*, Zech. i. 12.



## C H A P. VI.

*Earthquakes usually reckoned the fore-runners of other calamities. We have had many signs and warnings; and a long season of divine forbearance; though we are guilty of the like sins, as have brought destructive judgments on other people. The land full of Sin. Publick societies only punished in this world.*

**B**UT to come more particularly to consider the late Earthquakes. There are many things that should affect us with an holy awe and fear of God, and his judgments, upon those instances of his severity in Jamaica, in Sicily, and by the lesser one we felt September the 8th, 1692.

It is not to be overlooked, that most of the ancient historians do observe, that this kind of calamity has been the presage of further judgment. <sup>s</sup> And even such as have no great kindness for religion, Machiavel himself not excepted, have acknowledged this to be

<sup>s</sup> Cicero speaking of an Earthquake, Orat. 30. de Haruspicum Responsis, speaks to the like purpose: Etenim hæc deorum immortalium vox, hæc pænè oratio judicanda est, cum ipse mundus, cum aer, atque terra, motu quodam novo contremiscunt, & inusitato aliquid sono, incredibilique prædicant; in quo constituendæ nobis quidem sunt preces & obsecratio, quemadmodum monemur. Sed faciles sunt preces apud eos, qui ultro nobis viam salutis ostendunt: nostræ nobis sunt inter nos iræ, dissidiæque placandæ. And in another place, discoursing how in the second Punick war, C. Flaminius neglected the sign of futurities, to the ruin of the republick, his army destroyed, and himself slain: He adds, magnum illud etiam, quod addidit Cælius, eo tempore ipso, cum hoc calamitosum fuerit prælium, tantos terræ motus in Liguribus, Galliâ, compluribusque insulis, totâque in Italiâ, factos esse, ut multa oppida corruerint, &c. De divinatione lib. 1. §. 35. And afterward, §. 43, 50. speaking of other Earthquakes, he adds, Quibus portentis, magno populo R. bella, perniciosæque seditiones denunciabantur. Inque his omnibus responsa haruspicum cum Sibyllæ versibus congruebant.—And in another place he reckons Earthquakes among those things; Quæ nuper bello Octaviano magnarum fuerunt calamitatum prænuntiæ. Cicero de pat. Deor. l. 2. §. 13, 14.

true



true as to matter of fact. Socrates<sup>9</sup> in his ecclesiastical history, speaking of the Earthquakes that happened in Bithynia, and the neighbouring countries, in the days of Valentinian and Valens, takes notice of them as signs of the shaking and convulsions, and tumults and disorders, which should afterwards follow in the Christian churches. The whole known world, both land and sea, was then shaken, and its like the then unknown too; which might seem to be a prelude to the future conflagration, or destruction of the whole. Thucidides mentions an Earthquake in Delos, which in the<sup>1</sup> memory of the Grecians never shook before; that it was interpreted for, and seemed to be a sign of what was to come afterwards to pass, in a most bloody war.

We know that Earthquakes were foretold before the destruction of Jerusalem and the final destruction of the world, *Matt. xxiv.* That there shall be great Earthquakes in divers places. How far this may be understood in a metaphorical sense, is worth considering: because though some of those signs may be taken in a literal sense, others cannot; as how the stars should fall down from heaven. And the declared suddenness of Christ's coming to judge the world, pleads for the application of these illustrious signs to the destruction of Jerusalem. And so it was literally as to matter of fact, before the destruction of Jerusalem, as<sup>2</sup> Josephus relates. So before the end of the world, or the day of judgment, the last of the last plagues, *Rev. xvi. 18.* we read of *a great Earthquake, such as was not since men were on the earth, so mighty an Earthquake, and so great.*

I know many make light of these things, because they are capable of being solved by natural causes. But the hand of God is not to be overlooked in such things, under whose government and influence all natural agents act, and are over-ruled as to the time and

<sup>9</sup> Socrates Eccles. Hist. l. 4. c. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Thucidides de Bell. Pelop. l. 2.

<sup>2</sup> De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 12.



degree of their acting, especially such rare and unusual instances as Earthquakes. All second causes in their several motions need the continuation of the divine power and influence, in order to their operations, as well as their subsistence. God uses all creatures to be the instruments of his will, and to serve his purposes. Natural agents, and moral, are all under his direction. *Fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy wind fulfil his word*, Psal. cxlviii. 8. Blasting and mildew, drought and barrenness, an infectious air, pestilential diseases, &c. however brought about by natural causes, are under divine government, and act by virtue of his influence. He gives order to *the destroying angel in a pestilence*, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. He saith to the *sword, Go through the land*, Ezek. xiv. 17.

Now though I will not say, that always these things are presages of further calamity and judgment to a particular people; yet, because they have usually been followed by some such, and we have many other moral prognostications of divine displeasure, it should call us to a humble consideration of the grounds of our fear, as to national calamities. And there are several things (some whereof are taken notice of by <sup>3</sup> others) that may here very fitly be mentioned; as,

I. That we have a multitude of such signs, as have been generally esteemed the forerunners of public calamity. It is not the late Earthquake alone, but in conjunction with many other things, that is the ground of our fear. And the more signs we have, and the more they are despised, the louder is their voice, to those that will consider them. We had signs in the heavens in 1681. We have had Earthquakes of late in divers places; and God has lately taken peace from the earth, as to this part of the world, by engaging so great a part of Europe in bloody wars: all which has the appearance of some great things to be ushered in. I durst

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Fleming's discourse of Earthquakes, 8vo. some of whose remarks I here repeat.



not be confident, as many are, what they shall be, or the particular year, or season of their accomplishment ; I choose rather to acknowledge my ignorance in prophetic scripture ; though divers learned persons say more on that subject, than I am able to answer or refute.

2. That the longer the time is of God's patience and forbearance, with the distinguishing mercies and repeated warnings that we have had, the more terrible judgments are like to follow, if we are unthankful and impenitent after all. Deliverances, if not improved, are but reprimands from further judgment ; we may not be so much preserved and saved, as reserved to greater misery. That passage seems to record our doom, Psal. cvi. 43. *Many times did he deliver them ; but they provoked him by their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity.* As God will not always contend, so neither will he always forbear. There is no greater sign of a final overthrow, than a misimprovement of past mercies and judgments : and if God be provoked by national sins, we cannot think his anger will be turned away, while the cause of it remains ; that is as much as to say, *Except we repent, we must likewise perish.* Tho' a less repentance may prevent national judgments, than will preserve from eternal ruin.

Is it nothing unto us, that God has dealt so severely with other people ? When our privileges and obligations are equal to, or greater, than theirs ? There is hardly any one ill symptom that has ever been upon any people, that God has dealt in severity with, but something of it is observable and notorious amongst us. I grant, we must not set bounds to the patience of God any more than to his power : we know not how much longer he may bear with us, before he vindicate his own rights, or in what way, or to what degree he will do so, at least in our time. But we have no ground of confidence and security ; for for while we say, Peace, peace, sudden destruction ; yea, national destruction may overtake us, as travail upon a woman with child, And the rather, because all  
his



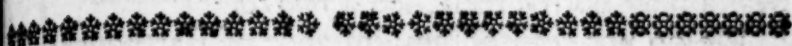
his warnings hitherto seem to be slighted : our national preservation and deliverance, so often repeated, has not bettered us ; but our provocations are rather the more aggravated, by all that God has done to reform, establish, and save us.

3. If we are guilty of the like sins with other peoples who have been severely punished by extraordinary judgments, why may not our continued impenitence expose us to an equal punishment ? And may not England say, *Are there not with me, even with me, the same sins against the Lord ?* The same sins, for which others have smarted, and that with this aggravation, that we sin against more warnings ? God is unchangeably just, as well as gracious : it is sovereignty alone can preserve us, by that he may do so ; but who can tell whether he will ? God hates the same sins in our days, which he hated and punished formerly : he is as much, or more, displeased with our impurities, as with those of other people, that are destroyed. He loves the same holiness now, which he ever loved ; he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ; and why should we think, God should go out of his way to spare us ? As they may encourage themselves by trusting in God, who have examples of God's deliverance, in the like case of holy trust in him ; so they may fear, under the like provocations, for which others have been punished.

4. When a land is *full of sin*, and the whole body of a nation, a very few excepted, have corrupted themselves, and provoked God ; consider, *the punishment of such sins can be only in this world, while the community lasts.* This is not to be reserved to the judgment of the great day, when every particular person shall answer for his own guilt. And is not our nation full of sin ? Do not our provocations reach to heaven ? Is there not a fulness, as to number and multitude, as to measure and degree, that the children fill up the measure of their father's iniquity ; and as to strength, and growth, that it rises higher ; and as to cunning and dexterity in the arts of wickedness, in court, city, country,



country, univerſity, among all ranks and degrees; and  
 as to boldneſs and impudence, by open bare-faced im-  
 piety? Many of thoſe crimes, which were formerly  
 matter of reproach and ſhame, are now a-la-mode, and  
 in faſhion, and the character of a Gentleman.



## C H A P. VII.

*Moſt ſlight ſuch warnings. What was done in Jamaica,  
 had ſpecial relation to us in this iſland. We in England  
 have had divers Earthquakes formerly. Their wicked-  
 neſs was great, ſo is ours. Several Earthquakes have  
 extended as far as ours, September 8th, tho' felt be-  
 yond the ſeas near the ſame time. Other inſtances of  
 Earthquakes in Europe.*

**W**E ought to conſider the extraordinary warnings  
 that we have had by the late Earthquakes, in Ja-  
 maica, June the 7th, 1692. and here at home, Sep-  
 tember the 8th, and what we have lately heard concern-  
 ing Sicily. This is the more to be attended to, becauſe  
 the moſt are ready to aſcribe all to natural cauſes.  
 There is an atheiſtical, and prophane ſpirit viſible a-  
 mongſt us, to diſregard any thing of the hand of God  
 in theſe matters; as if he did not direct ſuch a judg-  
 ment, to one place rather than another, and determine  
 and over-rule the time, and ſeaſon, and degree of it.

Conſider what was done in Jamaica, had a ſpecial re-  
 ference to this nation; the intereſt, and the inhabitants  
 of that place, being purely Engliſh, and ſo a part of  
 our nation, though at a diſtance: which calls upon us  
 the more to lay it to heart. Neither is it to be de-  
 ſpiſed, that they in Jamaica had a forewarning by a  
 trembling of the earth, a little before that deſolation  
 overtook them; and ſoon after that, we had the warn-  
 ing of the Earthquake here: it followed ſo cloſe upon  
 the tidings of that in Jamaica, as to be very proper to  
 awaken



awaken us to a deeper sense of it, and to make the warning the more remarkable. So that God may say of us, as he did to Moses, If they will not hearken to *the voice of the first sin*, they may yet hearken to *the voice of the second*: and the dismal account since that of the Earthquake in Sicily, makes a *third*; if that of Malta may not be reckoned a *fourth*.

We do not read of any instance of Earthquakes before in that island of Jamaica, since it was under the English power, nor before while under the Spaniard: but we have had several instances of Earthquakes amongst us formerly in England, and these parts of Europe, though more seldom than in the east; therefore it is not unreasonable for us to expect and fear the like.

It is true, those countries which are very hot, or very cold, are least subject to Earthquakes; and therefore it hath been matter of wonder in Egypt, or in <sup>4</sup> Scythia, to have the earth tremble. Great Britain and Ireland are reckoned among those parts of Europe least liable to violent Earthquakes; and yet our historians mention several; as,

*Anno dom.* 1081. April 6. in the time of <sup>5</sup> King William the first, (or the Conqueror) was an Earthquake here with a great noise, in the 15th year of his reign; and followed within a few years with many calamities.

In Henry the first's time <sup>6</sup>, the earth moved with so great a violence, that many buildings were shaken down; and Malmesbury saith, that the house wherein he sat, was lifted up with a double remove, and at the third time settled again in the proper place. And in divers places it gave forth a hideous noise, and cast forth flames at certain rifts many days together, which neither by water, nor by other means could be suppressed. In Lombardy the same year, was an Earthquake that continued for forty days, and remov-

<sup>4</sup> Herodot. I. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew Paris. Speed's Chron. p. 446.

<sup>6</sup> Baker's Chron. p. 43.



ed a town from the place where it stood, a great way off.

*Anno 1133.* Matthew Paris mentions a great darkness in England, and an Earthquake at the same time.

*Anno 1165.* He mentions another Earthquake, in the 11th year of Henry the second, January 26. in Ely, Norfolk and Suffolk, which threw down many persons, who were standing or walking; and made the clocks to strike, and bells to ring in the steeples. And in the 24th year of his reign, in the territory of Darlington, in the bishoprick of <sup>7</sup> Durham, the earth lifted up herself in manner of an high tower, and so remained unmoveable from morning till evening, and then fell with so horrible a noise, as frightened the inhabitants thereabouts; and the earth swallowing it up, made there a deep pit, which is seen at this day: the pits in that place are commonly called Hell kettles.

*Anno 1180.* A great Earthquake threw down many buildings, amongst which the cathedral church of Lincoln was rent in pieces, April 25.

*Anno 1247.* There was an <sup>8</sup> Earthquake in April at London, especially felt on the banks of the river Thames, which shook, and threw down many buildings; and was the more terrible, because these western parts are less accustomed to Earthquakes. And the same year there was little ebbing or flowing of the sea observable as at other times, for about three months.

*Anno 1248,* The same historian mentions another Earthquake, which did a great deal of mischief, especially in the diocese of Bath; the bishop whereof gave him an account of it. And this was the third which had happened within three years on this side the Alps; one in some parts of Savoy, and two in England; which was the more terrible, because the like not known before in these parts. He takes notice of another Earthquake in England afterward, in the year 1250.

<sup>7</sup> Baker's Chron. p. 58.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew Paris.



In the 13th year of queen Elizabeth, a prodigious<sup>9</sup> Earthquake happened in the east parts of Herefordshire, near a little town called Kinaston. On the 17th of February, at six o' clock in the evening, the earth began to open, and an hill, with a rock under it, (making, at first, a great bellowing noise, which was heard a great way off) lifted itself up a great height and began to travel; bearing along with it the trees that grew upon it, the sheep-folds, and flocks of sheep abiding there at the same time. In the place, from whence it was first moved, it left a gaping distance forty foot broad, and fourscore ells long; the whole field was above twenty acres. Passing along, it overthrew a chapel standing in the way, removed an yew-tree planted in a church-yard, from the west unto the east: with the like force it thrust before it high-ways, sheep-folds, hedges and trees; made tilled ground pasture, and again turned pasture into tillage. Having walked in this sort from Saturday, in the evening, till Monday noon, it then stood still.

*Anno* 1588, the like prodigy happened in Dorsetshire, as in the year 1571, in Herefordshire. A field of three acres, with the trees and fences, in Blackmore, moved from its place, and passed over another field, travelling in the high-way that goeth to Herne, and there stayed.

In the 23d of Q. Elizabeth, *Anno* 1580, in the beginning of April, about six in the afternoon, happened an<sup>2</sup> Earthquake, not far from York, which, in some places, struck the very stones out of the buildings, and made the bells in churches to jingle. The night following the earth trembled once or twice in Kent, and again the 1st of May. This Earthquake was felt at London, so as to give occasion to an order of prayer, and a godly admonition concerning it, ap-

<sup>9</sup> Cambden's Eliz. p. 158. 159. Baker's Chron. p. 399.

<sup>1</sup> Cabdem's Eliz. p. 244. Baker's Chron. p. 400.

<sup>2</sup> Cambden, *ibid.* p. 286.



pointed<sup>3</sup> to be read for the turning God's wrath from the nation, threatened by the Earthquake, by order of the queen, and her privy-council, to be used in all churches and households throughout the realm.

*Anno 1657*, on the 8th day of July, there was an Earthquake at Bickley in Cheshire.

Germany, and France, and the Netherlands, have also felt Earthquakes. In April 1640, all the Low-countries, and a great part of Germany, were shaken by a sudden Earthquake; which sort of prodigy was very unusual, saith<sup>5</sup> Cluverius in those parts.

*Anno 1117*, in the 17th year of the emperor<sup>6</sup> Henry the Vth, the world was shook by terrible Earthquakes; cities, castles, villages, and a multitude of people were swallowed up in the caverns of the earth. Many at Liege, or Luyk, were destroyed by thunder, while they were paying their veneration to the saints for safety: mountains were cleft, rivers dried up, &c.

So lately as the year 1660, France had experience of an<sup>7</sup> Earthquake, which the Turkish Spy mentions, who was then at Paris. 'We have felt the menaces,' saith he, of a terrible Earthquake, this evening. 'When I lived in Asia, an Earthquake was almost as common as the yearly revolution of summer and winter: and we took as little notice of it, as we did of lightening, hail, or rain. But now I have been so long disused to these convulsions of the globe——that I am become like the rest of the world, timorous, and astonished,——my mind, at first, staggered as much as my body. When I was walking cross my chamber, and felt the floor rock under me, with that singular kind of motion, which no human art or force can imitate, I soon concluded

<sup>3</sup> Recited by Mr. D. Earthquakes explained and improved, 8vo.

<sup>4</sup> P. 134.

<sup>5</sup> Heath's Chronicle, p. 395.

<sup>6</sup> Cluverius, p. 743.

<sup>7</sup> Cluver. ad An. 1117. P. 434.

<sup>8</sup> Letter writ by a Spy at Paris, vol. 6. p. 58, 67.



'twas an Earthquake, but knew not how to bear  
 that thought with indifference. Death is familiar to  
 me in any other figure, but that of being so surpriz-  
 ingly buried alive; it appeared to me very horrible  
 to sink on a sudden into an unknown grave, I knew  
 not whither. Perhaps I might fall into some dark  
 lake of water; or, it may be, I might be drenched in  
 a river of fire, or be dashed on a rock; for who can  
 tell the disposition of the caverns below, or what  
 sort of apartments he shall find under the surface of  
 the earth? We walk on the battlements of a marvel-  
 lous structure, a globe full of tremendous Secrets.—  
 We had news here of an Earthquake, which had  
 overthrown part of the Pyrenean mountains, some  
 days before this happened at Paris; but few regard-  
 ed it. Calamities at a distance frighten no body:  
 yet those which we feel, put us all in fears.' —  
 In another letter, he saith, 'The Earthquake lately in  
 these parts, hath put all France into a great conster-  
 nation, astonished every body, and encreased the  
 thoughtfulness of the wise. The first effects of it  
 were felt by the inhabitants of the Pyrenees, which  
 are certain mountains dividing France and Spain.  
 There it did great mischief, overwhelming some me-  
 dicinal baths, many houses, and destroying hundreds  
 of people. Only one mosque, or church, which  
 sunk into the caverns below, was thrown up again,  
 and stands very firm, but in another place. This is  
 looked upon as a great miracle, especially by the  
 French, who have disputed with the Spaniard for  
 this church, as standing on the frontier line; but  
 now is removed near half a league within the acknow-  
 ledged limits of France'. The matter of fact is all I  
 urge this testimony for; his remarks here (and in  
 many other places) not being such, as a serious chris-  
 tian will approve.

If France, and Britain, and Germany, have had  
 few Earthquakes, in comparison of other places of  
 the east, yet Italy hath often smarted under such ca-  
 lamities



larnities. Among many instances, I will recite some, besides those already mentioned.

*Ann. Dom.* 801, while Charles the Great was in Italy, there was an Earthquake<sup>8</sup> with great noises, on the last of April, which shook all France, and Germany, but especially all Italy; it overthrew several towers, and even mountains; and the church of St. Paul, at Rome, was destroyed by it. Whereupon Pope Leo the Third, appointed three days before the ascension, solemn fasts, and processions. These prodigies were followed with furious tempests, and contagious diseases, which affected the cattle throughout Italy, so that the most of their beasts died.

*Ann.* 1180, an Earthquake ruined a great part of the city of Naples.

*Ann.* 1222, there were such<sup>9</sup> Earthquakes in Italy and Lombardy, that the cities and towns were forsaken; and the people kept abroad in the fields and tents; many houses and churches were thrown down, and many were thereby crushed to death. The earth trembled twice a-day in Lombardy, for fourteen days together. Besides two cities in Cyprus destroyed by Earthquakes this year. The city of<sup>1</sup> Brescia was then almost ruined.

*Ann.* 1276, in July, the same month when Adrian the IVth was made pope, and within a few days after, was<sup>2</sup> a dreadful Earthquake at Milan, and all the country round about. Which pope died the next August, and, in September, another succeeded by the name of John the XXIst.

*Ann.* 1348, was so famous for Earthquakes, and for contagious diseases in Italy, and other parts of Europe, that<sup>3</sup> Albertus Argentinensis saith, that, from the time

<sup>8</sup> Le Sieur Hist. de l'Eglise, &c. vol. 7. p. 2, 3, 4to.

<sup>9</sup> Cent. Magdeburg. vol. 3. Cent. 13. cap. 13.

<sup>1</sup> B. Corio Hist. Milanese, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Corio ib. p. 268. Il che si prese per indicio de' grandissimi fatti.

<sup>3</sup> Cluver. ad An. 1348. p. 516.



of the flood, there was not such a season of mortality, (*Haud inde a deluvio regnasse tantam vim morborum & mortium putet.*)

*Ann.* 1397, on St. Stephen's day, all Lombardy <sup>4</sup> was shaken by an unusual Earthquake, which destroyed very many buildings, &c.

*Ann.* 1456, there arose upon the sea of Ancona, together with a thick gloomy cloud that extended above two miles, a tempest of wind, water, fire, lightening, and thunder; which piercing to the most deep abysses of the sea, forced up the waves with a most dreadful fury, and carried all before it upon the land; which caused so dreadful an Earthquake, some time after, that the kingdom of Naples was ruined, and all <sup>5</sup> Italy carried the dismal marks of it. A million of houses and castles were buried in their own ruin, above 30,000 people were crushed to pieces, and a huge mountain overturned into the lake de la Garde.

*An.* 1473, there was such an Earthquake at <sup>6</sup> Milan, and the country round about, as the like was not known in the memory of any then living there.

*Ann.* 1590, the election of pope Urban the VIIth, (who, in ten months, made room for Gregory the XIVth.) was signalized by an <sup>7</sup> Earthquake, by which Austria, Moravia, and Bohemia trembled; accompanied with a prodigious drought that summer; upon which ensued a famine, and pestilence, with such havock in Italy, that, in one year, there died at Rome 60,000 persons.

*Ann.* 1629, the divine anger broke out upon Italy by such horrible <sup>8</sup> Earthquakes, that, in Apulia, 17,000 persons were destroyed.

*Ann.* 1638, Athanasius Kircher, the jesuit, in his preface to his *Mundus Subterraneus*, gives a sad narra-

<sup>4</sup> B. Corio Hist. Milanese, p. 542.

<sup>5</sup> Monthly Mercury, March 1693, p. 90.

<sup>6</sup> Corio Hist. Milanese. p. 820.

<sup>7</sup> Cluverius ad An. 1590. p. 625.

<sup>8</sup> Cluverius, p. 680.



tive of a dismal <sup>9</sup> Earthquake in Calabria, wherein himself was, and out of which he hardly escaped with his life: nothing to be seen in the whole country he passed by, for two hundred miles in length, but the carcases of cities, and the horrible ruins of villages; the inhabitants wandering about in the open fields, being half dead with fear, and expectation of what might follow. But most remarkable was the subversion of the noted town of St. Eufemia, which was quite lost out of their sight, and absorbed; and, instead thereof, nothing but a stinking lake, &c.

Italy and Sicily abound with subterraneous fires, especially in the southern parts; which have broke out so often, as to be called, by the ancient inhabitants, *The Burnt Country*. In some places are seen perpetual burnings, as in *Ætna*, and *Vesuvius*; in others, conflagrations by times: all *Campania* carries footsteps of such conflagrations. Mount *Ætna* hath often raged mightily, and hath been wont to do so <sup>1</sup> almost as many years before Christ as since. *Anno* 1669, it broke out with violence, and overthrew all the adjacent places with very great desolation, sorely threatening *Catanea* itself, which is since wholly destroyed by the late Earthquake. These irruptions of mount *Ætna* and *Vesuvius*, are always accompanied with Earthquakes, more or less: which sometimes do incredible mischief in those parts. For instance, *Anno* 1688, we have an account from <sup>2</sup> *Naples*, June the 8th, of an Earthquake there, which was accompanied with the rage and roaring of mount *Vesuvius*. ‘ On Saturday last, the 5th instant, about the 22d hour, happened here a dreadful Earthquake, (though it lasted not long) which, frightening the inhabitants out of their houses, with the terrors of an inevitable destruction, they betook themselves to the piazza’s, and the open publick places of the city. The old college of the

<sup>9</sup> Cited by Mr. Ray, p. 185.

<sup>1</sup> Kircher’s *Mundus Subterraneus*.

<sup>2</sup> *London Gazette*, 1688. N<sup>o</sup>. 2358.



' jesuits was ruined by it, also the great chapel of their  
 ' new college, together with three other chapels ad-  
 ' joining ; three of the fathers were killed there, besides  
 ' many others, whose names are not yet known. The  
 ' front of another great church of the jesuits opened  
 ' in many cracks, and the great tower, or steeple,  
 ' seemed ready to fall. In the Theatins convent of  
 ' the holy apostles, a whole dormitory fell down, be-  
 ' sides other considerable damage they received : and  
 ' the magnificent arch, erected before the church of  
 ' St. Paul, belonging to the said fathers, fell, together  
 ' with those great and ancient columns, that formerly  
 ' made part of the temple of Castor and Pollux, there  
 ' remaining only four of them standing, and those in a  
 ' tottering condition. Out of those ruins there have  
 ' been already dug nineteen persons that were dead ; and  
 ' there was reason to fear that the mischief might have  
 ' been much greater, it being so near to a publick mar-  
 ' ket, where there were great throngs of people. The  
 ' walls of the great church of St. Dominick opened in  
 ' many places, and great part of the refectory fell down,  
 ' as also part of the adjoining palace, where many were  
 ' killed. Several other churches of the Augustins, &c.  
 ' were ruined : and, in short, there is scarce a palace  
 ' or house that has not received some considerable da-  
 ' mage. This occasioned very devout processions of  
 ' persons of all ranks. The next day there was another  
 ' great shock, which threw down many of the houses  
 ' that were before the most weakened : and yesterday  
 ' there was another perceived but without much da-  
 ' mage ; but this day we have felt nothing of it.  
 ' However the processions continue in great numbers,  
 ' and the persons of quality are all retired from hence.  
 ' In the neighbourhood of Udico, a city at sixteen  
 ' miles distance from hence, a mountain opened, and  
 ' a courier from Benevento, a city belonging to the  
 ' pope, brings an account, that it was all ruined, and  
 ' that of 6000 inhabitants there were but few left alive.  
 ' The archbishop's palace there was thrown down ;  
 ' and the archbishop himself drawn out of the ruins,  
 ' being



‘being hurt in his head and arm : and there are accounts of the like damages in several other places.’

Which was confirmed from Rome, June 12. 1688.

‘We have had nothing considerable to entertain us here this week, but the sad relations of the terrible Earthquakes at Naples, and several places about it. It happened at Naples on Saturday last about twenty one hours and a half, (which, at the same instant was perceived even by a great many here ;) on Sunday too it returned. Several churches, palaces, and houses, are ruined ; among the rest, the famous church of the Jesuits, reckoned the finest in Italy, is all tumbled down, except the walls and the high altar. The particular number of those killed and buried in the ruins, cannot yet be known. The last letters say, many of the inhabitants lie abroad under tents, in coaches, &c. and continual prayers, processions, publick penances, &c. are performed ; and every one runs about, crying, *Misericordia*. Three ships were sunk in the harbour, and the water in the wells rose many handfuls. Benevento is almost totally ruined ; and of 10,000 inhabitants they say there remain scarce 600 alive. Cardinal *Ursini*, their archbishop, was taken out of the ruins alive, but hurt. Several other places and seats are quite ruined, and most of the inhabitants swallowed up. This city, and the country hereabout, just felt the shock, but received no harm.’

And, in a following account a month after, it is said, the damage done amounts to above 50,000,000.

Now, since by these, and other examples (in the next chapter) we find Europe hath been visited by such calamities formerly : if the like moral causes be found among us, the divine justice can punish us by the like kind of severity : and we ought to apprehend and consider it.

The wickedness and impiety of the inhabitants of Jamaica, we are told by eye-witnesses, was grown to a



very great height, before this judgment : and they must be great strangers to England and London, who will not own the same of us, both as to principles and practice. Few will deny it, as to the latter : and as to the former, it is dreadful to think how atheism and infidelity prevails, and barefaced Deism, with the rejection of Christianity, and all revealed religion ; how it has obtained, and spread in this nation : as if we were weary of the Christian profession, and would set up for Paganism, to the subversion of the whole frame of the gospel of Christ ; pulling the crown from off his head, and plucking him from his throne. Or, at best, amongst a numerous growing party of others, who own themselves Christians, the divinity of our Lord is disowned, and they allow him to be but a meer man, not the eternal Son of God. When such provocations abound amongst us, it should affect us with horror, especially when they prevail against the highest means and mercies, and spread as a gangrene over the whole kingdom.

There were some circumstances of the Earthquake amongst us, September 8th, that have been observed to be very peculiar. I do not reckon this for one, that at the same hour the earth trembled here at London, and at many distant places, both in this kingdom, and in the Low-countries, and the adjacent parts of Germany and France, notwithstanding the sea between us and them : for Earthquakes have reached farther. Not to mention that Earthquake at the death of our blessed Saviour Christ, which shook not only one part of the earth, as in other cases, but the whole of it trembled, if <sup>3</sup> Dydimus may be credited : or the extent of that,

<sup>3</sup> Lescloper in Cicero *De Nat. Deorum*, p. 229. Quo motu, non pars aliqua Terræ, ut semper alias, sed tota Terra conquassata est, & centro convulsa, ut nulla Tellus, ne nostra quidem Gallia (quam Plinius a Terræ motu immunem fecit) primo ipso Motore e vivis amoto, cum suis omnibus Incolis, immotisque adeo Judææ rupibus, in tam insolenti commutatione, non moveretur : & vero cum Dominus dedit vocem suam, mota est Terra ; ut canit divinus Vates, quantum putamus amplius commotam esse, cum Dominus dedit Animam suam.

whereby



whereby \* twelve cities of Asia fell at once. Gassendus, in the life of Peireskius, reports, that at the mountain Semo in Æthiopia, there happened a burning at the same time with that of Vesuvius in Campania, *An.* 1633. So that not only Vesuvius communicates with Ætna, by subterraneous vaults, but also Ætna with the mountains of Syria, the tunnels running under the depths of the Mediterranean sea; and those with the Arabian; and, lastly, the Arabian with mount Semo in Æthiopia. And we read of other instances, particularly by the Earthquake in France and Switzerland, May 12, 1682, which reached as far as Cologne in Germany, and was perceived in Lionnois, Dauphiny, and Beaujolois, at Mets in Lorrain, in Provence, &c. That the cities of Orleans, Troyes, Sens, Chalons, Joinville, Rheims, Soissons, Laon, Moscon, Dole, Strasburg, &c. felt it, especially Remiremont on the Moselle. The whole world almost trembled at once by the Earthquake, *An.* 1116. And by the Earthquake, *An.* 1601, Asia, Hungary, Italy, Germany, and France, are said to have trembled at one time; that Earthquake extending from Asia to that Sea that washes the French shores, the whole length of Europe in a quarter of an hour; besides some Asiatick regions, it shook Hungary, Germany, Italy, and France: This is affirmed by good writers, saith Mr. Boyle<sup>5</sup>, and Mr. Ray<sup>6</sup>, relating from *Josephus Acosta*, an Earthquake in *Peru*, that reached for 160 Leagues. And *Fournier* gives an account of one in *Peru* that reached 300 leagues along the sea-shore, and 70 leagues inland, and levelled the mountains all along as it went, threw down cities, turned the rivers out of their channels, and made an universal havock and confusion. And this, he saith, was done within the space of seven or eight minutes.

Some have observed, that most people had their

\* Cluverius, p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> *Of the effects of languid motion*, p. 49, 50.

<sup>6</sup> *Physico-theological discourses*, p. 215. Fromond. Meteor. l. 4. cap. ult. art. 4. Dr. Tho. Burnet's *Theory of the earth*, p. 119, 120.



heads affected with an unusual giddiness, before they apprehended, or understood any thing of the Earthquake. The time of it also may be observed by you of this city, viz. the second week in September, to remember you of a former judgment by fire, in the first week of that month.

Now think a little, what would have become of us, if it had lasted but a few minutes more? How near were we to ruin? How soon can God do the like again, if his calls to repentance be not obeyed? And how impossible is it for all the great men of the world, as to cause such a thing, so to hinder or prevent it, or to preserve themselves or us, if God should thus visit us in his anger another time?



## C H A P. VIII.

*Many examples of terrible Earthquakes in other parts of the world, formerly, and of late.*

**I**T hath been observed by divers, what Plato mentions in his *Timæus*, of a vast island without the straits of Gibraltar, called Atlantis, and bigger than Africa and Asia together, which in one day and night by a violent Earthquake, and mighty flood, and inundation of water, was wholly overwhelmed, and drowned in the sea. Earthquakes have made way for the irruption of the sea in divers places. Our island of Great Britain is supposed to be broken off from the continent in France by that means, and Sicily from Italy. Many rivers have changed their channels, and many countries have been turned into desarts by Earthquakes. By that means the river <sup>s</sup> Indus in Asia, that receives fifteen other rivers into it, did change its channel, and the neighbouring country turned into a

<sup>7</sup> See Mr. Ray of the primitive chaos, chap. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Purchas, out of Strabo, l. 15.



wilderness. Diodorus Siculus<sup>9</sup> mentions more than 20,000 Lacedæmonians that perished in Sparta by an Earthquake, that was of long continuance. In the 7th year of the reign of Herod, by an Earthquake in<sup>1</sup> Judea, 10,000 men, and a vast multitude of cattle were destroyed.

'Tis about 2066 years ago, that there happened<sup>2</sup> one in Achaia, which almost utterly destroyed it, and which was attended with inundations, which in the very heart of Corinth deluged the cities of Helice and Buris: of which<sup>3</sup> Ovid makes mention:

*Si quæras Helicen & Burin, Achæidas urbes,  
Iruen.es sub aquis; & adhuc ostendere nautæ  
Inclinata solent cum mænibus oppida merfis.*

' He that for Helice or Buris seeks,  
' Achæan cities, fam'd among the Greeks,  
' Deep under water sunk, may find them now.  
' And seamen, they that oft the ocean plough,  
' Now over lofty towns we sail, they cry,  
' That once survey'd the secrets of the sky.'

Tyre and Sidon in Phænicia suffered exceedingly by Earthquakes, and an infinite number of people buried under their ruins. And Strabo mentions a city, situate about Sidon, that was wholly swallowed up by an Earthquake. Twelve cities in one night in Asia,<sup>4</sup> Pliny mentions. But St. Augustine<sup>5</sup> is cited for what is more strange, that in a famous Earthquake an hundred cities of Lybia were demolished.

In Trajan's time, the city of Antioch was swallowed up, *An.* 105, and a great part of Asia with it: and some other earthquakes there, I have already<sup>6</sup> mentioned. The terror of that in the time of the emperor Trajan, is described by several<sup>7</sup> historians.

<sup>9</sup> Lib. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Josephi Antiq. Jud. l. 15. c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Orosius,

l. 3. c. 3. Diod. Sic. l. 15. § 48.

<sup>3</sup> Metamorphosis, l. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. 1. c. 84.

<sup>5</sup> De Miraculis SS. l. 2. c. 3. *if that book*

*be his,*

<sup>6</sup> Chap. 2. p. 76.

<sup>7</sup> Dion. Cass. Trajan. § 18.



*Anno* 177. Smyrna in Asia was overthrown by an Earthquake, (as a few years since it was again) <sup>8</sup> towards the rebuilding whereof, the emperor Antoninus forgave ten years tribute.

Ammianus <sup>9</sup> Marcellinus speaks of very dreadful Earthquakes that happened in Macedonia, in the time of the emperor Constantius. And of one that he saith was universal, in the time of the emperor Dioclesian. And <sup>1</sup> Sozomen gives an account, that *anno* 358. the city of Nicomedia was overthrown by an Earthquake, which made the council appointed by Constantius to meet there, to be put off to another Year. The city of <sup>2</sup> Nice in Bythinia was ruined, and almost all the inhabitants destroyed twelve years after this, saith Socrates.

*Anno dom.* 557. There was a violent Earthquake at <sup>3</sup> Constantinople, that lasted for many days; and every hour the city suffered extraordinary shocks. Many houses were thrown down, but the people betook themselves to prayer, and fasting, and repentance; and God had compassion on them: but many other cities in the east were ruined by it. And even Alexandria in Egypt shaken, which was the more strange and astonishing to them, because it seldom happens in those parts. *Anno* 986. there was another at Constantinople, which was so violent, that not only the walls and churches were shaken by it, but all <sup>4</sup> Greece.

In the twelfth century there were many in the <sup>5</sup> east. And, in the year 1300. which began the Turkish Empire, or the Ottoman Æra, <sup>6</sup> Platina relates such an Earthquake at Rome, as the like was never before. And, *anno* 1348. such a one at <sup>7</sup> Constantinople, as endured for forty days, and reached in the extent of it to Hungary and Italy; twenty-six cities overthrown by it, mountains torn up by the roots; several men, women,

<sup>8</sup> Eusebius.

<sup>9</sup> Lib. 17, & 26.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. 4. c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Socrates, l. 4. c. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Le Sieur. Agathias.

<sup>4</sup> Cedrenus.

<sup>5</sup> Cent. Magdeb. cent. 12. cap. 13. de Miraculis.

<sup>6</sup> Life of

Pope Boniface the viiith.

<sup>7</sup> Aventinus.



and beasts, by that strange exhalation turned into statues of salt.

In Persia, *anno* 1400<sup>8</sup>. Herbert gives an account of an Earthquake, which threw down 300 houses in the city of Liar. And, *anno* 1593. the whole city (which they boasted to consist of 5000 houses) was shaken, and 3000 houses overthrown, and as many of the inhabitants killed.

In the Azores, or French islands, in the West Indies, (St. Michael's island) Linscot mentions an Earthquake, *anno* 1591. that<sup>9</sup> endured shaking from July 26. until the 12th of August, to the extreme terror of the inhabitants: especially when by force thereof, they perceived the earth to remove from place to place; and Villa Franca, the best town it had, to turn topsy-turvy: the ships that then rode at anchor in the bay, trembled and quaked; insomuch that the people verily thought doomsday was at hand, and that the fabrick of the universe was disjoining.

In Tercera, the first and biggest of those islands, called the Azores, there happened a great<sup>1</sup> Earthquake, May 24. 1614. that overturned, in the city of Agra, eleven churches, nine chapels, besides many private houses. And in the city of Praya hardly an house was left standing. And in the year 1628, June 16. there happened so horrible an one in the island of St. Michael, that not far from it the sea opened, and thrust forth an island above a league and half in length, at a place where was above 150 fathom water.

*Anno* 1581. Joseph Acosta relates, that in Peru there happened an Earthquake, which removed the city of Anguangu two leagues from the place where it stood, without demolishing it, in regard the situation of the whole country was changed.

*Anno* 1657. The Spaniards (saith the<sup>2</sup> Turkish Spy) have lately felt a terrible blow in Peru; which if it be

<sup>8</sup> Herbert's Travels, p. 120. <sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 398. <sup>1</sup> Mandello's travels into the Indies, added to Olearius, p. 221. <sup>2</sup> Vol. 5. l. 3. Lett. 9. p. 204.



not a mark of the wrath of heaven, is at least a sign that the earth is weary of them, especially in those parts where they have stained it with so much innocent blood. The city of Lima not many moons ago, was swallowed up by an Earthquake: and Calao, another city not far from it, was consumed by a shower of fire out of the clouds, 11,000 Spaniards lost their lives in this calamity; and the earth devoured an hundred millions of refined silver, which the lucre of the Spaniards had forced out of its bowels. All the mountains of Potosi, from whence they dug their choicest metal, were levelled with the plain, and no more hopes of gold was left to their insatiable avarice.

Concerning this city Lima in the kingdom of Peru, we had a sad account of another Earthquake there, October 20. 1687. (if it be not the same, and the date mistaken) which overthrew the whole town, not leaving one house standing; and buried many of the inhabitants under its ruins. At the same time Callao, Fanette, Pisco, Chancay, los Florillos, &c. most of them sea-port towns, were destroyed by an inundation of the sea, which carried several ships above three leagues into the country; and great numbers of people and cattle were drowned, there being found, when the water fell, at one place near the sea-side, above 5000 people dead; and every day more were found, so that no account could be given of their number. This was mentioned in the <sup>3</sup> London Gazette, and confirmed by many merchants letters; though the damage by the inundation was lessened by another account afterwards.

<sup>3</sup> An. 1688. Num. 2349.



## C H A P. IX.

*God will yet preserve his church and enlarge the kingdom of Christ; tho' particular churches and countries may be destroyed. The accomplishment of scripture prophecies and promises, ushered in by great commotions, and by Earthquakes. Some instances thereof.*

**L**Astly, However God may deal with any particular branch of the Protestant reformed churches, as to national judgments; yet we may hope he will gloriously accomplish his own work, for the spreading, and enlarging of the kingdom of Christ; and that all the shakings of heaven and earth, shall but make way for the desire of all nations to come. God has preserved his church hitherto, notwithstanding all opposition. The preservation of the Venetian government for 11 or 1200 years, is nothing to the continuance and progress of the Christian church, in the midst of paganism atheism, anti-christianism, deism, arianism, socinianism, and all the scoffs, and reproaches, and opposition of sensual profane infidels. It hath born up its head under all the revolutions, and changes of countries and nations; notwithstanding all the wars, and confusions, and overturnings, that have been in the world. The kingdom of Christ is an everlasting kingdom, and shall endure; he will always have a church and people, against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail. Tho' famous countries and cities have been destroyed, that made a great figure in history, whereof nothing is now left but their very name; and hardly so much of their dust and ashes, as will suffice to write their names in. But Jerusalem, that is from above, the city of the Great King, which is built upon the rock, doth and shall indure. No length of time can weaken this foundation, no storms can shake it, no Earthquakes overturn it, no waves or floods drown it. There ever hath been, and will be, a  
church



church of Christ on earth, professing so much truth as is necessary to salvation. He hath appointed his ordinances, and a ministry to continue to the end of the world, and promised his presence with them: he hath appointed the memorial of his dying love to be kept up, till his second coming: and therefore will always have a people, amongst whom these shall be kept up. Tho' particular churches, in this country, or another, may have their rise, growth, and period, as there have been particular inundations in several countries, notwithstanding the oath of God to Noah, that there should not be another general deluge: but the truth of God endures throughout all generations: mount Sion abideth for ever, and cannot be moved; and all the promises of the latter days shall certainly be accomplished: though I will not be positive, as to the time of those things, so as to ground any assurance concerning their near accomplishment, or the particular share of this nation in them: yet as to such prophetick periods, God will break through all obstructions to accomplish his own counsel. And what the present shakings, and convulsions of the nations round about, may issue in, who can tell? For never was any great good to the church, or any considerable reformation introduced, without great commotions; and literal Earthquakes are often taken notice to have preceded.

About the beginning of the reformation from popery, *An.* 1569, and 1570, there was one in Ferraria, which country was lately given to the pope, and in Portugal, whereby <sup>9</sup> Lisbon was shaken, 1500 houses ruined, all the churches turned into rubbish, the ships swallowed up in the ocean, the river thrown out of its channel. And the same earthquake affected the Netherlands, and caused great inundations of the sea. And the like formerly is observable before the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms, that there

<sup>9</sup> P. Jovius.



were frequent Earthquakes, and other prodigise. Before Saladin attempted the overthrow of Jerusalem, and to ravage the holy land, *An.* 1172. <sup>1</sup> great Earthquakes preceded. *An.* 1300. when the Turkish empire began to be considerable, there <sup>2</sup> was such an Earthquake at Rome, as the like never was before. As when the Pagan empire was to turn Christian, in the time of Constantine the Great; great Earthquakes also did precede: by one whereof thirteen cities in Campania were overthrown.

Great designs of providence being served, and the changes of States and countries ushered in by Earthquakes, after the mention of that terrible one in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, Zech. xiv. 5. it is added, *And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee*: Or thus, *And yet O Lord my God come, and all the saints with thee*. Notwithstanding our fears and terrors, without this we should not see thy salvation. Dr. <sup>3</sup> Jackson thinks that Earthquakes were emblems, and types of that great change by the ministry of John the Baptist, our Lord's forerunner, in the 15th year of Tiberius, who declared the kingdom of heaven was at hand; when publicans and sinners were advanced, and the children of Abraham, who gloried in their birthright, were debased; when poor fishermen became heads of the tribes of Israel; greater men in the house of God, than Moses and Aaron had been; while the successors of Moses, the chief priests and doctors of the law, were infatuated, and like salt without taste or favour. And he reckons the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xl. 14. *every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and bill shall be brought low*, was fulfilled, and answered in its literal meaning (in part at least) by

<sup>1</sup> Saladinus adjecit animum ad regni Jerosolymitani everfionem, prævio, ut solet fieri, terræ motu, quo Antiochia, Laodicea, Alapia, Cæsarea, Emiffa, Tripolis, aliæque urbes ferè conciderunt. Cluverius.

<sup>2</sup> Platina.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Jackson's works, Tom. 2. Part 2. lib. 7. p. 526.



that terrible Earthquake in the 6th or 7th year of the emperor Tiberius, which overthrew twelve famous cities in Asia. For among other symptoms of it, Tacitus <sup>4</sup> relates this for one, that *the vallies were exalted, and mighty hills brought low*. Before the accomplishment of divers prophecies, God gives some glimpse or hint, by some real event, answerable to the plain literal sense of the prophet, but immediate prognosticks of greater mysteries approaching.

He saith farther, that the Earthquake which happened in Jewry, while Augustus Cæsar, and Anthony tried their fortunes in that great and famous sea-fight at Actium, was in part an accomplishment of the prophet Haggai his literal meaning, chap. ii. 6, 7. *Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land: and I will shake all nations, &c.* This shaking of the nations, and of the earth at that time, was a sore prognostick of that mystery, which the prophet in the following verses foretells, viz. That *the glory of the latter temple should be greater than the glory of the former*; and that *He, who was the desire of all nations, and the glory of both temples, the prince of that peace which God had promised to give in Jerusalem, should shortly come*. For about twelves years after, Herod erects the temple anew, and made it, even for external pomp and ornament, more beautiful than Solomon's temple had been; that the King of glory, and Prince of peace, for whose entertainment (though unwitting to Herod) it was erected, might come into it, and fill it with glory. And within eighteen years after Herod began this work, our Lord was presented in it, and acknowledged by Simeon to be the light of the Gentiles, (or one desired of all nations) and the glory of his people Israel.

Great Revolutions, and changes sometimes for the better, but more often for the worse, have been ob-

<sup>4</sup> Sedisse immensos montes, visa in duo quæ plana fuerint. Tacit. Annal. lib. 2.



served to follow Earthquakes, as to natural, civil, and ecclesiastical affairs : let me mention some instances.

Three cities in <sup>5</sup> Cyprus fell by an Earthquake, in the time of Vespasian and Titus, followed with a great pestilence at Rome. In Julian's <sup>6</sup> time there were several great Earthquakes, followed with a terrible famine at Alexandria, and in Egypt <sup>7</sup>.

*An. Do.* 342, Constantius made several beneficial laws for the people, and renewed the privileges granted to artificers. It is observed he was constrained thereunto by a sense of publick calamities : for during the war with Persia, and about those times, great mischiefs had proceeded from many and most terrible <sup>8</sup> Earthquakes. St. Jerom in his Chronicon tells us, that the following the death of Constans the younger, many cities of the East fell to the ground by an horrible motion of the earth. And some three years after this, that Neocæsarea was overturned, and all its inhabitants perished, except such as were saved with the bishop in the church : as also that the year following this, and preceding the building of the Haven in Seleucia, Dirrachium was by an Earthquake demolished, Rome trembled for three days, and as many nights, and many towns of Campania were sorely troubled. To these Cedrenus adds, that in the fourth or fifth year of Constantius, Antioch was endangered by an Earthquake of three days continuance ; that in his eighth year Rhodes was much distressed by the same accident : that when Dirrachium, the city of Dalmatia, perished, and Rome was in such danger, twelve cities of Campania were destroyed : And that in the 12th year of Constantius, the greater part of Berytus, the city of Phœnicia, also miscarried. In which year also happened an

<sup>5</sup> Orosius, l. 7. c. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Sozomen, l. 6. c. 2. Theodoret, l. 4. c. 4.

<sup>7</sup> See Höttingeri Dissert. de Terræ motu, Diss. 4. quæst. 3. Unde Terræ motus immittantur, sintne fortunæ, purè naturales, an

πῶλατοι.

<sup>8</sup> Howel's Gen. Hist. Vol. 2. p. 83, 84.



eclipse of the sun, on the sixth day of the month Desius. The ill success of Constantius in the Persian war, was by the more orthodox Christians, according to the judgment of parties, concluded to have happened to him, because of his adhering to, and countenancing the Arian heresy.

*Anno 344*, in the fifth year after the death of Constantine, (Marcellus and Probinus being consuls) a synod was held at Antioch that condemned Athanasius, and only in words professed to own the Nicene faith, but really to condemn it, and substitute another in its room. This impiety God declared against by <sup>1</sup> terrible earthquakes, say the historians of that time, especially at Antioch, for above a year together.

*Anno 366*, while Procopius's rebellion was yet but little advanced, July 21, in the consulship of the two emperors, Valentinian and Valens, there happened such horrible Earthquakes throughout the world, as neither true historians have related the like, nor fables themselves represented to us. A little after the day dawned, there was a great tempest of thunder and lightening, which was followed by so dreadful a trembling of the earth, that the sea also was shaken therewith, and deserted the shore, and its ancient bounds for a great space; and the depth of its channels were discovered; multitudes of fish were seen to stick in the mud, and the unequalness of the sea's bottom appeared, here hills, and there vallies, which never had before seen the sun, since, at the original of all things, they were first overwhelmed with the floods. Many ships were left on the dry ground, and swarms of people flew thither to catch fish; when suddenly the sea, as disdainful to be imprisoned, returned to its former place with such fury, that, not containing itself therein, but transported beyond its bounds, by the violence of its rage and motion, it overturned houses and other buildings innumerable, drowned many thousands of

<sup>1</sup> Sociat. Hist. Eccles. l. 2. c. 7, & 10.



men, and overwhelmed numbers of ships; great vessels were, by the violence of these gusts, blown upon the tops of houses, as it happened at Alexandria, and some near two miles from the shore, as Ammianus Marcellinus (who relates these things, lib. 26.) saw one himself <sup>2</sup>. This prodigy we cannot take to have signified any thing to Procopius's rebellion, so much as that dreadful inundation made in the Roman empire by the northern nations, which shortly after happened, and the ruin of the western provinces, which followed thereupon.

In the year 430, a great <sup>3</sup> Earthquake preceded the death of one of the best emperors, viz. Theodosius, as the fore-runner of great changes. Some <sup>4</sup> think this the same with that *An.* 446, which Marcellinus writes to have happened in the consulship of Ælius and Sepronius, which raged in many places, and therein overturned many cities; the wall of Constantinople, though but new built, it threw to the ground, with fifty-seven turrets: stones of great bulk, lately placed in the building of the forum of Taurus, fell down. Many towns were ruined, and a pestilent vapour arose, which caused a plague; and this, joined with a famine, destroyed many thousands. The civil motions and ruptures in the Roman empire, were agreeable hereunto.

This Earthquake, in the reign of Theodosius, Evagrius <sup>5</sup> saith, was the greatest, and most memorable of all others; such, as by its greatness, rendered considerable all that went before it. It afflicted, he had almost said, the whole world. The earth gaped, and

<sup>2</sup> Howel's Gen. Hist. vol. 2. p. 231. ad An. C. 366.

<sup>3</sup> Tricesimo deinde Anno Theodosii, terræ motus facti sunt ingentes per menses aliquot integros, maximarum prænuntii mutationum, quibus respublica tum ecclesiastica, tum mundana mox laboravit, ac tantum non occidit. Romanum tum præsulatum accepit Leo, qui primus in omnes totius orbis christiani episcopos dominatum sibi aliquem, ut privilegio Petro dato, cœpit arrogare. Cluverius, p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> Howel's Hist. p. 673.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. 1. cap. 17.



swallowed many villages, besides many other, nay, innumerable, calamities, both by sea and land. Some fountains were dried up; in other places water in great quantity broke out, where, formerly, it had not been known: great trees were torn up by the roots: heaps of earth were so shaken together, that they were raised into mountains. The sea cast forth dead fishes: in it many islands were overwhelmed and sunk: ships sailing in the sea, by a sudden retrocession of the water, were left on dry ground. In conclusion, many places of Bithynia, the Hellespont, and both the Phrygias were grievously distressed. This disaster lasted a long time, and sorely afflicted the world. <sup>6</sup> Nicephorus writes, that it continued six months, and that in a manner without interruption; that it reached Alexandria, but especially afflicted Antioch. Besides the countries mentioned, by Evagrius, it invaded the greatest part of the east, and spared not many regions of the west. He adds, that the people of Constantinople, not daring to stay in the city, for fear of the fall of houses, continued, together with the emperor and Proclus their patriarch, in the fields, instant in prayer for the removal of so heavy a judgment.—Theodosius, when delivered from the danger of the Earthquake, presently betook himself to repair the walls of Constantinople, &c.

When <sup>7</sup> Chrysostom was banished, in the beginning of the fifth century, by the emperor Arcadius, from the church of Constantinople, the same night was a great Earthquake that shook the emperor's palace, and threatened the ruin of it; on which messengers were sent to recal him.

*Anno* 458, Evagrius writes of a great <sup>8</sup> Earthquake that happened at Antioch, which the citizens had sad cause to remember. Before it began, some of the in-

<sup>6</sup> Lib. 14. cap. 46.

<sup>7</sup> Theodoret, l. 5. c. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Howel's Hist. p. 702.



habitants were seized with an extraordinary madness, such as seemed to exceed all ferocity of wild beasts, and to be the prelude to that calamity which followed on the fourth day of the month Gorpiaëus, which the Romans call September, about the fourth hour of the night, and the fifty-sixth year of the life of Leo. It overturned almost all the buildings of the new city, which was well peopled, and none of it forsaken or empty, being curiously built by the magnificence of emperors, who strove to exceed each other in the adornment of it. The first and second fabricks in the palace were also cast down, the rest standing, together with a bath; which, having formerly been neglected, now when by the Earthquake the rest were choaked up, stood the citizens in very good stead. Many other damages of this Earthquake are there mentioned (with some differences as to chronology) and the disorder of publick matters, as the murder of Majorianus, joint emperor in the west, with Leo in the east, &c.

*An. Dom.* 557, there was a violent Earthquake, with great noises and tempests, at Constantinople and Rome, in <sup>9</sup> Justinian's time, followed the next year with a great plague at Constantinople. The Earthquake, which shook that city three years before, lasted forty days, and destroyed many places in the east.

In the year 648, before the <sup>1</sup> Saracens over-run Africa, there were many great Earthquakes in the time of the Emperor Constans. The like <sup>2</sup> Earthquakes followed with great calamities in the east, were observed,

*Anno* 679.

In the year 740, was another at Constantinople, which also destroyed many cities of Asia, and lasted a twelve-month. This was thought to <sup>3</sup> forebode the death of the Emperor Leo, the loss of Artabasdus, and the conquest of Constantinople, which soon after followed.

<sup>9</sup> Agathius, who continued the history of Procopius.

<sup>1</sup> Cent. Magdeburg. cent. 7. c. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ingruentium malorum prænuncius. Cluver. p. 350, 406.

<sup>3</sup> Cent. Magdeb. cent. 8. c. 13. Cluver. p. 358.



In the year 791, in the time of the empress Irene, a great favourer and patroness of image-worship, was another violent Earthquake at Constantinople.

In the year 1077, the Earthquake, on the 6th of April, in the 15th year of king William the Conqueror, was followed by many calamities, say Matthew Paris, Speed, &c.

In the year 1088, the Earthquake, in the time of William Rufus, or William the Second, was followed with such unseasonable weather, that there was no seeds-time till December.

In the year 1298, the Earthquake at Rome, in the time of Boniface the Eighth, (who fainted away for fear, and afterwards published a jubilee) was followed with many calamities.

*An. Dom.* 1509, on the 14th of September, there happened a terrible Earthquake at Constantinople, and the country thereabouts, in the time of Bajazet the Second; by the violence whereof, a great part of the walls of that imperial city, with many stately buildings, both publick and private, were overthrown, and 13,000 people overwhelmed and slain. The terror thereof was so great, that the people generally forsook their houses, and lay abroad in the fields; yea, Bajazet himself, then very aged, and sore troubled with the gout, for fear thereof, went from Constantinople to Adrianople; but finding himself in no more safety there than before, he left the city, and lay abroad in the fields in his tent. This Earthquake endured by the space of eighteen days; or, as the Turks histories relate, for a month, with little intermission, which was then accounted ominous, as portending the miserable calamities which afterwards happened in the Ottoman family.

<sup>4</sup> Hospinian de orig. templorum, l. 2. c. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Instabit nimirum ferale seculum, quo solvendus e carcere Sathanas, sursum deorsum omnia volutare cogitabat. Cluver p. 497.

<sup>6</sup> Knolles's Turkish History. Bajazet the Second.



After this Earthquake ensued a great plague, where-  
with the city was grievously visited, and, for the most  
part, unpeopled. But when the Earthquake ceased,  
and the mortality was asswaged, Bajazet caused the  
imperial city to be repaired with all speed, and em-  
ployed 80,000 men about it, who, in the space of four  
months, in a most beautiful manner, repaired the ruins  
of that great city.

*Anno* 1510, the late wars of the French in Savoy,  
were thought to be foreshewn by many prodigies, and  
even those preceded by an Earthquake in Apulia,  
whereby more than 16,000 persons were overwhelmed;  
after which ensued the war, which devoured more  
than 1,000,000 of men.

*Anno* 1631, the like terrible Earthquake, in Fe-  
bruary, was in and about the city of Naples, before  
the commotions and troubles there, which did such  
mischief as to houses, men and cattle, as can't be ex-  
pressed.

In the year 1590, the election of pope Urban the  
Seventeenth, was signalized by an Earthquake, which  
made Austria, Bohemia, and Moravia to tremble, and  
was followed by an extraordinary drought. Gregory  
XIV. quickly succeeded, and died in ten months.  
There was such a famine and plague in <sup>7</sup> Italy that  
year, that above 60,000 died.

<sup>7</sup> Cluverius citing Thuanus.



## C H A P. X.

*Concerning the fear of divine judgments, and the regulation of it. What fear of Evil God hath promised, and we may expect to be delivered from, and what not. Counsels proper to obtain an interest in those promises, and to experience the fulfilling of them.*

**A**FTER all these examples of terrible Earthquakes, which may make us tremble, it may be proper to add something to regulate our fears of divine judgments, and to establish our hearts under the doubtful expectations of what God will do against us. There is a natural fear of approaching evil, which we must not expect to be delivered from, nor is it possible we should. There is also a fear of prudent caution, that may help us to suppose, and provide against the worst that may happen: this we are obliged to, as opposite to security; this will make us flee to God as our refuge and hiding-place. Neither must we expect to be delivered from the fear of all temporal evils; considering what our present state in this world is, and what is suitable for such imperfect sinful souls, who must have matter of mourning, while there are such remainders of sin; especially being in the condition of strangers, in a foreign country, and in the midst of enemies; and who have this present world to be saved from, and the love of the world to be mortified; and who must expect to be treated as the followers of a crucified Saviour, and so to be conformed to him, our head, in suffering, or in resolution and readiness for it. Therefore, though it be true, that if our hearts are fixed on God, we need not be afraid of evil tidings; and God has promised to deliver us from anxious, tormenting fears: yet so much fear of evil as is needful to drive us to God, by prayer, dependance and trust, we must not expect to be delivered from; especially as we are members of a defiled, divided church; or  
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live in a city, or country, where are many whose sins call for judgment, whom God does punish in this world. We may not think, in such a case, that we shall be quiet from all fear of evil, especially if we ourselves have (as doubtless we all have) contributed our own share to the common guilt.

But such as fear the Lord, may hope to be delivered from the fear of evil ; so as it shall not overwhelm their spirits, and destroy their confidence and hope in God, weaken their hands in present duty, and take away the relish of their present mercies, or would dispirit and distract them. Such a fear of evil is threatened as a punishment, Deut. xxviii. 64. Job. xviii. 5. *Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet. Thou shalt be afraid to go forth into the field, or to walk by the way : for the sword of the enemy, and fear is on every side.* Jer. vi. 25. chap. xx. 2. chap. xlix. 29. *They shall cry unto one another, and use this expression, Fear is on every Side ; that is, ' We know not what to do, or what to expect ; whither to go, or what course to take ; what council to follow, or what evil next to look for ; or how far it will proceed, or when or where it will issue'. The like instance see Isai. xxviii. 2.*

God promises his people, that they shall be kept in peace, shall sleep in quiet, shall dwell in safety, Psal. iv. last ver. Prov. iii. 24, 25, 26. *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid : yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh : For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken,* Job xi. 18, 19. Psal. cxii. 7, 8. God promiseth us quiet, peace and safety, from the real hurt of temporal evil ; and from the temporal afflictions themselves, if that be best ; and from such a fear of approaching judgment and calamity, as the wicked are punished with.

If you would be interested in these promises, and experience the fulfilling of them, study much the

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covenant of grace, and God's unchangeable fidelity to it. This is the ground of support in the worst times, *Isai. xli. 1. Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. This is all my desire, and all my salvation,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 'I now need nothing more, I fear nothing, I am solicitous for nothing. Let God build up or pull down, save or destroy; prolong, or shorten my life; do what he will with me and mine, he is my God and covenant'. This made the Psalmist triumph in faith, *Psal. cxviii. 6. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear: God is our refuge and strength, we will not be afraid, though the earth be moved, and the pillars thereof be shaken,* *Psal. xlvii. beginning; Habak. iii. 17. 'I am not afraid of what man can do, I am not afraid of what God will do, or what I shall do, or the nation do. By this consideration, That He is my God, I can answer all my fears: by this I know my great interest is secure, my treasure is safe, my principal concern is out of danger. He is my God in an everlasting covenant; he will not leave till he bring me to glory: if my body perish by an Earthquake, my soul shall ascend to heaven. The noise of wars, and rumours of wars, shall not break my rest, for I have peace with God through Christ.'* Study therefore the covenant of grace, and the promises of it; and believe the unchangeableness of God, and his power, truth and goodness, to make them good.

And, in order to your advantage, by the consideration of God as in covenant, labour to strengthen and increase your faith, that you may be able to apply all the promises of the covenant for your comfort. If we did heartily assent to the truth of the promises, and had a realizing view of what God is, and can be, and do, for all that fear and trust him; and did more intirely yield, and devote ourselves to him, as our Lord and Sovereign, our God and portion, to be governed and

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disposed of according to the tenor of his covenant, (all which is implied in faith) this would relieve us against a thousand fears : this would make it evident to ourselves, that let our dangers be what they will, we are safe in the hands of a faithful, and a good God : all events are under his management, and shall accomplish his counsel. Our dangers shall reach no further, rise no higher, last no longer, than to serve his glorious purposes.

Accordingly we read, Isa. xxx. 7. compared with the 15th verse, that in cases of danger, *our strength is to sit still.* Not in opposition to the use of means for our safety, for that is the duty of every man in his place : but in opposition to reliance on any other help than God ; as an expression of faith in God, described at the 15th verse : *In returning, and in rest shall you be saved ; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.* Waiting on God in the way of our duty, so far as we know it, in expectation of what God shall please to do for or against us.

You ought also to recollect, and improve former experiences, to silence distrustful fears. *The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusted in him, and I was helped,* Psal. xxviii. 7. Experience worketh hope ; and that which assisteth our hope must needs scatter our fears.

Endeavour also to mortify the love of this world, and of life itself ; and look to your integrity and uprightness of heart : This will make you as a *brazen-wall, and an iron pillar* : whereas an hypocrite will be afraid of every shadow. No wonder if *the sinners in Sion are afraid, and fear surprizeth the hypocrite, while the righteous are bold as a lion.* It is therefore good advice of Zophar unto Job, chap. xi. 14, 15. *If iniquity be in thy hands, put it far from thee, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle.* And then it follows, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot ; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and thou shalt not fear.*

Resign



Resign and give up your selves, and all you have, into the hands of God. Commit the keeping of your souls, and the keeping of the nation, and of the city, and of your families, and friends, and relations, into the hands of God, as of *a faithful creator and preserver*, 1 Pet. iv. 19. Leave all to his care, resolving to be satisfied, and pleased with his holy will. We shall not be afraid of losing that by violence which we have voluntarily given up into the hands of God.

But especially, let us give up ourselves, by renewing our covenant, penitently and seriously, at the table of the Lord. See that there be no controversy between God and you, while he hath a controversy with the nation in general. Renew repentance for past backslidings, that your peace may be made with heaven; that *God may not be your terror, in a day of evil*: For nothing will so much take away the heart, abate the courage, the vigour, and firmness of your spirits, as the jealousy and misgivings of a guilty conscience. If you cannot look up to God with comfort, if you cannot lift up your eyes to heaven with hope, to what refuge will you flee in a day of evil?

This is the great counsel I would give, and take, as the best preparation for whatsoever should come to pass. For what can daunt the courage of that man, or woman, who can say, *This God is my God for ever; this Saviour, who hath all power in heaven and in earth, is my Saviour and my Lord, and the Lord of all this world?* An upright Christian, with assurance, was never a coward, and never can be. But if we live at uncertainties about our spiritual state, if our backslidings be many our corruptions strong, and our evidences blotted, we must needs be afraid of publick changes, and threatened calamities, because we are afraid to die. Shall I mind you how sad the case of Saul was, when he cries out, 1 Sam. xviii. 15. *I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answers me no more?* How miserable is their case, who, in a time of trouble, cannot ease their hearts by prayer

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to God? who, in a time of danger, cannot look to the end and issue of things with comfort? who have no anchor to drop in a storm? The difference is unspeakably great, at such a time, between the one sort and the other: For while *the wicked is driven away in his wickedness*, and hurried by temporal sufferings into eternal ones, *the righteous hath hope in his death*, Prov. xiv. 2.



## C H A P. XI.

*Security a presage of temporal and eternal ruin, to particular persons, whatever God may do as to the nation in general.*

**L**Astly, Whatever God may, in sovereignty, do in sparing this nation, and how well soever he will provide for those who are upright before him; yet, as to particular persons, who are not at peace with God, it is most certain that security is a presage of ruin; that sudden destruction shall overtake them, as travail on a woman with child. When the slothful and wicked servant thinks, and says, in his heart, that his Lord doth delay his coming, *He will come and cut him in sunder, in a day that he looked not for, and in an hour that he was not aware of*, Matth. xxiv. 55. When the rich fool in the parable said, *Soul, take thine ease*; the next news we hear of him is, that the pillow is plucked from under his head, and he is cast into hell. When, notwithstanding all the warnings of God by his word and providence, men will *bless themselves in their hearts*, and say, *I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart*, Deut. xxix. 19, 20. *The Lord will not spare such a man, but the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against him, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.* Therefore, let men take heed how they arrogantly boast themselves in their wickedness



wickedness, lest God single them out unto some signal vengeance in this world, to make them examples to those who shall afterwards live ungodly. If they regard not a judgment to come, to put the evil day far from them, and despise all the fore-runners of judgment in this world; yet they may suddenly be surprized in their security, and they are every moment liable to a sudden arrest of judgment, against which they have no relief.

They are under condemnation, they are yet in their sins; and therefore to such I must say, *except you repent, (speedily and heartily repent) you must perish.* For tho' God be loth to strike, and inclined to pity, and willing to spare; tho' he be slow to anger, and ready to forgive; yet the day of his vengeance is at hand, when he shall put on fury like a garment; when his eye shall not pity, nor his hand spare; when he shall laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. Now, O foolish delaying sinner, that goest on in sin! the patience and mercy of God pleads for thee against his justice, and he would lead thee to repentance by his long-suffering; his bowels yearn over thee, and he would fain overcome thee by his love, and conquer thee by his grace: but the day is hastening, when there shall never be a word spoke for thee by the mercy of God more; when, because he stretched out his hand, and thou regardest not, thou wouldst not hear his voice, or know the day of thy visitation, he shall condemn thee without pity, and send thee to hell, without any such compassionate language as he used to his ancient people, *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?* The voice of mercy shall then cease, and plead for thee no more: *He that made thee, will shew thee no mercy; he that formed thee, will shew thee no favour.* He would now delight in thee, and rejoice over thee to do thee good, and therefore beseecheth thee to have pity on thyself: but then he will delight in the glory of his provoked justice; because thou wouldst not be persuaded to accept of his mercy while it might be had. Think of it and tremble, all ye that go on in sin, and hate to be reformed!

Whatever



Whatever become of the nation, if national judgments do not overtake you, you cannot be long out of the grave, or out of hell. You are in danger of damnation every hour : And, *though sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged; yet surely I know he shall not be well with the wicked,* Eccl. viii. 11, 12,

Christ hath told you again and again, that such as you can never be saved. It is the word of the living God, that such and such persons as you know your selves to be, shall never enter into heaven. It is a truth founded on such principles, that the contrary is impossible.

And yet to convince men of this as to their own state and condition, there is the difficulty. For, if you will not believe God and Christ, how shall I expect you should believe me ? Alas ! you will not consider your case for one serious hour : We can hardly prevail so far, as to bring you to compare yourselves with the word ; and your own character with the description of such as shall perish. You will put it to the venture, and a bold venture it is : for if no minister in the world should tell you, that *except you repent, you must perish* ; yea, if the devil should tell you the contrary a thousand times, it will not make the word of God of none effect, or your damnation the less certain.

You may make a shift for a little time to drown the voice of conscience, or stop its mouth ; to lay aside the thoughts of death, and judgment, and an everlasting hell ; to speak peace to yourselves, against the express word of God : but if you are not renewed and sanctified ; if you do not truly repent, so as to hate sin, and leave it, and turn to the Lord : if you do not unfeignedly give up

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greater than others. Divine patience will not last. The Lord is not slack (as men count slackness) in the promise of his coming, but is long-suffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; 2 Pet. iii. 9. But if they turn not, he whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath prepared also instruments of death, Psal. vii. 13. Tho' there are in God riches of goodness, and bearance, yet if you despise the riches of his goodness, knowing that the goodness of God leads to repentance, do but treasure up to your selves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Rom. ii. 4, 5.

It is dreadful to perish as to a temporal ruin, by war and fires, and earthquakes, and such calamities; how much sadder is it to think of descending into a place of remediless torment, under the everlasting wrath of God; to be tormented with the devil and his angels. It is sad to hear of this, sad to see it, to consider it, to think of it; but it will be much sadder to find it, and to feel it. And be not deceived, it is not far off; because it is yet future. You are now living, and do now see the grave digged for you; and yet you must die; and as certainly do I know from the word of God, who cannot lie, That except you repent, you will perish, and that for ever.

THE END.